

Education, G2 pages 12/13

W E M A K E T H E N E T W O R K

Middle East talks in London



Yasser Arafat arrives for talks with Tony Blair yesterday



Protesters burn an Israeli flag in Downing Street



Tony Blair ushers Binyamin Netanyahu into Number 10

The perils of taking centre-stage

Downing Street is playing down expectations as 'Blair the statesman' wades into the world's most intractable dispute, writes **Ian Black**

SPENDING bank holiday Monday trying to sort out the Middle East is no body's idea of fun. But for the Prime Minister, who wants to shine on the international stage, the temptation was too great to resist. Yet Tony Blair's talks yesterday with Binyamin Netanyahu and Yasser Arafat were never likely to produce a dramatic breakthrough. Britain, Downing Street insisted, was just a "facilitator", while the United States was in the "driving seat".

It was a sensible line to take after the exaggerated expectations created when the Prime

Minister's new "walking-on-water" aura carried him from the Good Friday agreement in Northern Ireland straight into the jaws of the world's most intractable dispute. After Robin Cook's controversial performance in Jerusalem, Mr Blair's smoother persona and pro-Jewish tilt guaranteed him lavish praise when the Israeli prime minister agreed to a summit with the Palestinian Authority president in London.

Mr Netanyahu commended his guest's "perseverance, diplomatic skills, agility at thinking through complicated problems". But British media coverage of "Blair the peace-

maker" was even more flattering, though there were attempts to play down expectations. Hosting these talks was tempting because British prime ministers rarely now play a global role. True, we still belong to the best clubs — the United Nations Security Council, Nato, the Group of Eight — but east of Suez there is only one superpower. And for all the Government's "leaderist" rhetoric during Britain's presidency of the European Union, the carping about Mr Blair's performance at the weekend euro summit in Brussels was a far cry from his glowing recep-

tion in Amsterdam within weeks of the election a year ago. There he bicycled nimbly for the cameras and impressed leaders with his enviable parliamentary majority and lawyer's grasp of detail. But on Saturday some saw new-boy naivety in his handling of the embarrassing row about whether a Frenchman or a Dutchman should be the first president of the European Central Bank. There was a sense of *schadenfreude* — and not just from the Germans — that the class swot, who has not yet deluged to join the Euro-club, had not done his homework. Romano Prodi, Italy's prime minister, called Mr Blair "ill-prepared". Victor Klima, the Austrian chancellor, said: "There were people much more experienced than me who said they had never seen anything like it."

The Prime Minister's official spokesman yesterday said Britain acknowledged that the summit had been "messy" but said the right decision had been reached. He said the leaders of some other member states — which he would not name — had told Mr Blair by phone yesterday morning that the summit had produced the right outcome. While blaming Britain may come too easily to old EU hands, Blair the statesman is still happiest when working with the Americans. Already close to the White House on Ulster and Bosnia, he won brownie points in Washington (though not with Arafat) for his unique support for the US during the crisis on UN weapons inspections in Iraq — and his solidarity as the replay approaches. But Europeans who worry about the sanctions and oil

Blair enjoys helping set the world to rights, but not all problems can be solved. Ulster's Protestant plantation ended centuries ago, while Israel's PM still encourages Jews to settle land claimed by Palestinians

deals were not alone in noting the difference of emphasis between Downing Street and the less gung-ho Foreign Office at the approaching prospect of bombing Baghdad.

Whitehall equanimity as Alastair Campbell and team reduced modulated briefing papers to tabloid-style bullet points. Stories about Saddam Hussein smuggling anthrax in bottles of duty-free gin underlined the difficulties when *abroad* becomes a domestic problem. Yet this government has done well in demonstrating how foreigners matter at home, emphasising the importance of fighting drugs and creating jobs, showing that globalisation, for all its opportunities, has a dark side that links Afghan warlords to heroin on the streets of Leeds. Thus, amid Blairite bonding with Bill, Helmut and Boris at the G8 summit in Birmingham next week, there will be a pared-down agenda that focuses on employability, crime and the international economy — a far cry from the

excesses of recent years. Mr Blair clearly enjoys helping set the world to rights, but not all problems can be solved in the same way. Ulster's Protestant plantation ended three centuries ago, while Israel's prime minister still encourages Jewish settlers to occupy land Palestinians claim as their own. In the Middle East, as elsewhere, substance is more important than spin. As Shimon Peres, Mr Netanyahu's disappointed predecessor, told Mr Blair before yesterday's talks: "Not everything is necessarily set up for a photo opportunity. It is also necessary to build things, even if they are not photogenic."

Fallout after euro-fudge, page 7; John Redwood, page 8; Leader comment, page 9; Criticism mounts, page 12

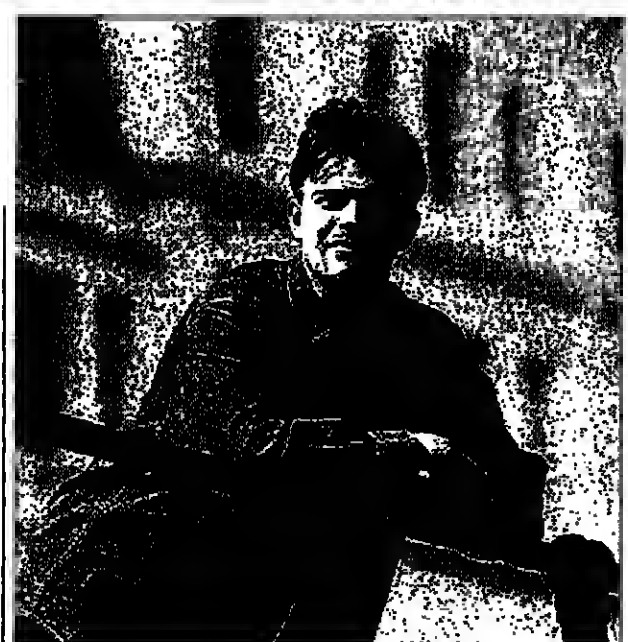
Prince's Trust joins in New Deal jobs scheme

Ewen Macaskill, Chief Political Correspondent

THE Government is to link up next month with the Prince of Wales's pet project, the Prince's Trust, in an attempt to create more young entrepreneurs in the next stage of its New Deal jobs programme. The two will combine to provide advice and grants to young people who have been refused finance by banks in trying to get their business ideas airborne. The Employment Department will provide £55 million over the next four years for 10,000 young people, and the trust will administer it, giving start-up loans and support. The New Deal, which began in April, offers only four options at present to young people who have been unemployed for six months or more: job experience, further education, voluntary work or helping with environmental projects. The Prince's Trust link-up will offer a fifth option, self-employment.

The New Deal is one of Chancellor Gordon Brown's flagship projects, financed by the £2.5 billion windfall tax and intended to help break the cycle of youth unemployment. But it has met criticism that in some parts of the country no matter how much training and experience young people receive jobs are not available. The Prince's Trust, which has 50 offices throughout the country, was set up more than a decade ago by Prince Charles to help underprivileged young people. A spokesman for the trust said the prince, who is its president, has been kept informed of the new enterprise. The spokesman added that the trust had a good track record: 35,000 young people had set up in business over the past 11 years. Sixty-five per cent were still trading after three years and a further 18 per cent had left their businesses for other jobs or education. "That is a higher success rate than the banks and we only take the banks' rejects," the spokesman said. Those

helped ranged from a youth dreaming up computer games through to one who set up his own designer clothes firm. The latest scheme will be launched on June 1 by the Employment Minister, Andrew Smith. The Prince's Trust will have to tender to run it but, according to informed sources, it is a foregone conclusion, given that the trust has been working on it in detail for months. Young people with business ideas will be identified at the initial New Deal interview and referred to the Prince's Trust, who will help draw up a business plan, test its viability and give advice on marketing. A business adviser in the field will be appointed to provide back-up for three years, and there would also be training in book-keeping and computers and help on legal matters, health and safety, and VAT assessment. Grants of £250 will be provided to test the viability of a business idea. Further grants of up to £5,000 will be available for viable business ventures.



Sky's the limit

CHRISTIAN Verheyden (above) thinks he is on a winner. He believes his company, Frontier Fireworks, will cash in on the demand for displays to mark the millennium, writes Ewen Macaskill. Mr Verheyden, aged 24, from Croydon, was cited by

the Prince's Trust as a success story, one of thousands who have benefited from the Prince of Wales's scheme to help young people marginalised by society. Mr Verheyden left school with GCSEs but no A levels, intent on a full-time career

as a javelin-thrower. But his career was cut short with back trouble that landed him in hospital. He said yesterday that when he had difficulty finding work: if he got through interviews, he would find himself turned down on medical grounds as being not fully fit for work. Two years ago he went to the Prince's Trust with a business plan, to put on fireworks displays, mainly because he had enjoyed elaborate pyrotechnics in the family garden down the years. He was given a £5,000 loan to add to £1,000 of his own. "Without the loan from the Prince's Trust, I would have found it very difficult," he said. He has since put on displays at locations from Dover Castle to St Augustine's Abbey in Canterbury, and is to break out into retailing. His projected turnover for the year is £40,000 and he has £50,000 in contracts for the millennium. He employs 20 people on a casual basis but will take on his first full-time employee, his girlfriend, this summer. He hopes to take more people on full-time next year.

The youngest star since Jimmy Osmond. Ain't that cute? No

Review

Caroline Sullivan

Aaron Carter
Hammersmith Apollo

"Please do not hite or chew your glowlight," warned a sign on the merchandise stall, as if there was a good chance the sight of Aaron Carter would make you gnaw your green neon necklace. But maybe it would, if you were five and this was your first pop concert. You know you're getting old when pop stars start looking — and indeed are — 10 years old. Aaron Carter is one of the two youngest people to have a UK top 10 single: just nine when his mercilessly upbeat *Crush On You* hit the chart last year, he shares the honour with Jimmy Osmond. Now 10, the Floridian has another hit, *Crazy Little Party Girl*, under his weeny belt, not to mention 11 gold discs from other countries. At an age when most boys would rather eat broccoli than kiss a member of the opposite sex, Aaron is singing love songs to them.

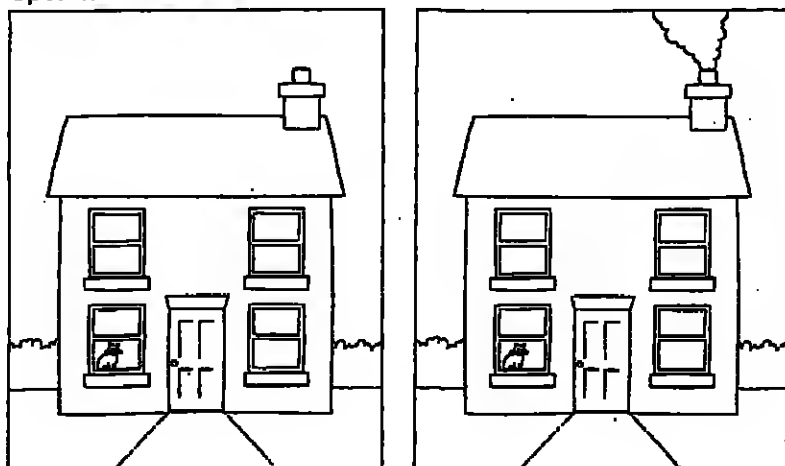
He makes his brother Nick, of teenage heart throbs the Backstreet Boys, look like a late developer. To comply with juvenile performer laws, his appearance was titillatingly brief. But his 20 odd minutes were an eye-opener. Thought the era of choreographed, unnaturally mature child performers ended with the Jackson 5? You want to see Aaron. His dancing and stage patter were Michael Jackson 1971. "I'm so glad to be here in England right now!" he shrilled, taking a breather between *Crush On You* and *Ain't That Cute*. Ain't That Sicken-ing was more like it, when he kissed a six-year-old fan like a 48-inch Julio Iglesias. Carter was as insincere and wooden as any prepubescent would be confronted with lyrics such as "You held my hand and looked me in the eye/I almost died deep inside". The lack of enjoyment in his empty face did not deter the sobbing, screaming girls, but confirmed the wisdom of the old adage "Don't put your son on the stage, Mrs Carter". The reason, in two words: Michael Jackson. This review appeared in some editions yesterday.

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Young 9

Leonardo Di Caprio, far right with Kate Winslet, leads the youthful onslaught, going straight to 25th in the cinema power list, but even he has a long way to go before he can compete with the likes of Walt Disney chairman Michael Eisner, right, who regained the top spot

Start Millar on the top film figures

Cycle network

Mrs Moyall Jerry's love to dress up Royal Albert "I'm a good A short history of the cover story

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Young guns join Hollywood elite

Leonardo Di Caprio, far right with Kate Winslet in *Titanic*, heads the youthful onslaught, going straight to 25th in the cinema power list, but even he has a long way to go before he can compete with the likes of Walt Disney chairman Michael Eisner, right, who regained the top spot

Stuart Millar on the 100 top film figures



THEY are the next generation, a new breed of marauding young actors leading a determined onslaught on the old-boy networks of Hollywood power and influence.

Headed — rather predictably — by Leonardo Di Caprio, they count the other trendy, youthful big hitters among their ranks: Will Smith, Matt Damon, Gwyneth Paltrow.

Meet the stars who are reshaping the cinematic universe, according to Premiere magazine's Hollywood Power List of the 100 most powerful figures in the world of film.

Di Caprio, who did not rate a mention a year ago, is now the 25th most influential of the industry's power brokers — making him the fastest rising young star. "As with Mozart, his gifts seem effortless and boundless," the magazine concludes.

Damon, who co-wrote and starred in the Oscar-winning *Good Will Hunting*, also has a coveted place on the list for the first time, along with Paltrow, star of *Emma*, *Great Expectations* and the new British film, *Sliding Doors*. One place ahead of Di Caprio is Smith, but he was on the list 12 months ago, albeit at a lowly 79th.

It is not only actors who are challenging the status quo, the list suggests. James Cameron, who directed Di Caprio in *Titanic*, the most expensive and successful movie ever made, is the first new entry to the Hollywood top 10 — up from number 30 last year.

James Meigs, the magazine's editor-in-chief, said the new breed was as significant a development as the emer-

gence of figures such as Francis Ford Coppola, George Lucas and Steven Spielberg two decades ago.

"The turmoil of the 1970s was unprecedented, but the 1998 instalment of the Premiere Power List reveals that a similar, though much gentler, shock wave is passing through the industry," he wrote.

But despite this shift, big-name established stars continue to wield considerable power. Once again, Tom Cruise, at number 6, is the only actor to make it into the top 10. Next comes Tom Hanks at 15 with Mel Gibson

one place behind, Harrison Ford and John Travolta fill the last two places in the top 20.

But even they have a long way to go before they can compete with the real power in Hollywood: the studio bosses. Although not the cigar-munching, colourful characters of cinema's Golden Era of the 1930s and 1940s, the current breed of movie moguls are just as powerful.

The top three positions this year are occupied by the same figures as last year. The only difference is that the top two have swapped places, with

Michael Eisner, chairman and chief executive of Walt Disney, regaining the top spot from Rupert Murdoch, whose News Corp owns Fox.

Summer Redstone, the 74-year-old head of Paramount's owner, Viacom, retains third place, while Spielberg, up from 6th to 4th, is praised as the closest Hollywood has to a trusted elder. Although *Titanic* broke the box office records set by *ET* and *Jurassic Park*, Spielberg could easily marshal resources to make three *Titanics* in a row, the magazine notes.

As a result, other industry observers are more sceptical

of claims a revolution is under way. "As far as Hollywood is concerned, it's business as usual," said Adam Minns, of Screen International. "Young stars may be appearing in the top 100 but the people who really have the power are the same people as before."

The list also contains further disappointment for British film fans. Despite persistent claims about the rebirth of the industry on this side of the Atlantic — fuelled largely by the success of *The Full Monty* — home-grown talent is notable only by its absence on the list.

Dame Judi Dench's Oscar nomination for Mrs Brown apparently failed to boost her influence; not even the *Titanic* phenomenon could do anything for Kate Winslet's power rating.

Once again, it is left to Sean Connery — dubbed the "original international man of mystery" by the magazine — to keep the British end up in 62nd place.

"The UK industry is still really more of a cottage industry," said Mr Minns. "It is an exciting place to be and lots of Hollywood studios are realising that, but in global terms it is not a player."

Scientists say mouse urine can cure cancer

Tim Radford, Science Editor

AMERICAN scientists may soon inject a human patient with new drugs that eradicate any kind of cancer — but so far only in mice.

"I am putting nothing on higher priority than getting this into clinical trials," said Dr Richard Klausner, director of the US National Cancer Institute. He called the treatment "the single most exciting thing on the horizon".

The drugs, called angiotatin and endostatin, block blood supply to the tumours. They were identified by Dr Judah Folkman of the Children's Hospital, Harvard Medical School, in Boston, in the course of solving a 100-year-old puzzle: some patients have only one big tumour. But months after the tumour is removed by surgery, a patient will develop a number of other tumours.

Researchers suspected that the big tumours somehow blocked the growth of small ones. They observed the progress of huge tumours in cancerous mice, and identified something in mouse urine that appeared to stifle secondary cancers. They had to collect 10 quarts of mouse urine to get 30-thousandths of an ounce of the mysterious substance.

It turned out to be angiotatin, part of a larger protein used in blood clotting. Dr Michael O'Reilly, also of Children's Hospital, extracted quantities of the protein from out-of-date donated human blood, and tested it on mice with large tumours.

The scientists removed the tumours and treated half the mice with salt water, half with angiotatin. The 10 given salt water grew new tumours. The 10 given the drug were free of cancer. Then the researchers found a second fragment of protein released by the tumours. They called it endostatin. They gave it to a mouse with a tumour that, in a human, would have weighed 1.5lb. It shrank the tumour to microscopic size.

A combination of both drugs has been tested in the laboratory over a period of years. Researchers say all tumours, and even leukemia, responded to the drugs. There

appeared to be no harmful side effects. Dr James Watson, who won the Nobel prize for his part in the deciphering of DNA, said: "Judah is going to cure cancer in two years."

Other scientists are more cautious. Nobody knows whether what works in mice will work in humans.

"Going from mice to people is a big jump, with lots of failures," Dr Folkman told the New York Times. "If you have cancer and you are a mouse, we can take good care of you."

The research comes hard on US claims that a new drug, tamoxifen, was responsible for a dramatic reduction in breast cancer incidence, and the discovery in Scotland of a single gene which looks likely to answer long-standing questions about lung cancer.

Almost three decades ago, President Nixon launched a huge "war on cancer". For more than 25 years, cancer cases continued to increase. But the race to "map" the 70,000 genes that add up to a human has begun to yield results: researchers are beginning to understand the machinery of being human — and the machinery of cancer. There has also been a huge programme of public education, emphasising the links between cancer, diet and habits such as smoking. Earlier this year the US National Cancer Institute reported that between 1990 and 1996 the number of cases of the top 10 killers, and the number of deaths, had begun to fall.

More than 20 leading figures in Europe's pharmaceutical industry have signed an open letter to members of the European Parliament, which on May 11 will vote on a common European patent policy for biotechnology and genetically engineered drugs.

The biotechnology patent directive has been contested by campaigners who say it allows the multinationals to patent life itself. But the pharmaceutical chiefs say: "For many patients, biotechnology offers safe treatments, improved vaccines, and more rapid and sensitive diagnostics to combat disease for which there is no therapy. This includes the major causes of human mortality, such as cancer, viral diseases, including AIDS, and heart disease."

Movie movers and shakers

- 1 Michael Eisner, chairman-CEO, Walt Disney (last year: 2)
- 2 Rupert Murdoch, chairman-CEO, News Corp (1)
- 3 Summer Redstone, chairman-CEO, Viacom (3)
- 4 Steven Spielberg, partner, Dreamworks (6)
- 5 Edgar Bronfman Jr, president-CEO, Seagram (4)
- 6 Tom Cruise, actor (9)
- 7 Joe Roth, chairman, Walt Disney Studios (7)
- 8 Robert Daly and Terry Semel, co-chairmen and CEOs, Warner Bros (5)
- 9 James Cameron (right), writer/director (30)
- 10 Peter Chernin, president-CEO, News Corp; and Bill Mechanic, chairman-CEO, Fox Filmed Entertainment (8)
- 11 John Calley, Sony (12)
- 12 Jonathan Dolgen and Sherry Lansing, Paramount (11/13)



- 13 Ron Meyer and Casey Silver, Universal Studios/Universal Pictures (14/25)
- 14 Tom Hanks, actor (16)
- 15 Mel Gibson, actor (15)
- 16 David Geffen, partner, Dreamworks (17)
- 17 George Lucas, producer/director (18)
- 18 Harvey and Bob Weinstein, owners of Miramax (36)
- 19 Harrison Ford, actor (24)
- 20 John Travolta, actor (19)

Cycle network gets 13-yard boost



A rider pauses on Britain's shortest cycle lane

Martin Wainwright

ALLOWING for a crunching gear change, it took all of 2.7 seconds yesterday to wobble successfully along Britain's shortest bicycle lane.

The briefest of havens from traffic on Bradford's Cemetery Road, the neat strip of coloured tarmac comes complete with two marker poles plus white-painted start and end signs.

Already submitted to the Guinness Book of Records, the 13 special yards have caused some puzzlement in Bradford as a tiny island of enlightened traffic management. For the rest of the quarter-mile road, whose name

can sometimes seem relevant to lorry-dodging cyclists, the mini-lane disappears completely.

"It's neither use nor ornament — I don't see why on earth it's there," said local cyclist John Swinden, aged 41, who can clear the lane in just over two seconds.

Civic dignitaries joined in the disbelieving reaction, including the Labour council's chair of transport, Latif Durr, who said: "It is absolutely silly. It looks absurd and I'm sure it must be the smallest cycle lane in Britain. It's a joke and I can't believe we gave permission for it."

The lane was organised and paid for by the locally based supermarket chain Morrison's, whose new Farmer's

Boy factory in Cemetery Road was approved subject to Bradford's usual checklist of "green" requirements. The firm said these included provision for cyclists, and Morrison's had followed the city's instructions along the relevant section of the highway.

The lane's loneliness stems from the long history of neighbouring companies, established when cyclists came bottom of a pecking order headed by trolleybuses and trams. But cycling enthusiasts in Bradford yesterday foresaw a day when the 13 yards might link up with something much grander — including, possibly, the other 6,498 miles, 1787 yards of the proposed £2 million millennium National Cycle Network.

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Mrs Moynihan-Williams was so thrilled that, when Ben & Jerry's launched their Cool Britannia flavour, she agreed to dress up as Britannia and ride a chariot around the Royal Albert Hall, dragging a 10ft inflatable ice cream tub. "I'm a good sport," she says, by way of explanation. A short history of Cool Britannia

G2 cover story

Brain-injured fighter, 22, battles for life in hospital

Banks rejects BMA call to ban boxing

Ruaridh Nicoll

SPORTS minister Tony Banks weighed in and defended boxing against the British Medical Association yesterday, as one of the sport's young stars fought for his life in a London hospital.

"Going for a ban is not the answer to this situation and it certainly isn't one that the Government is contemplating," he told Radio 4.

On Saturday night, the career of 22-year-old bantamweight Spencer Oliver was effectively ended when he needed emergency brain surgery at the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery in Bloomsbury. The BMA has since renewed its call to ban the sport.

The fighter, recently voted Young Boxer of the Year, was defending his European crown against Ukrainian Sergei Devakov when he was hit with a right that tore a blood vessel at the back of his brain. Mr Banks — who said he used to box, and enjoyed the sport

— denied there was anything inconsistent about his backing a ban on foxhunting while refusing to do so for boxing. But he accepted the sport would find itself under scrutiny again.

"I think one has to accept that there are elements of danger in this sport. I do believe that there is a case yet again to look at the way boxing is organised."

He thought the Boxing Board of Control might examine the possibility of shorter rounds and more extensive pre-flight medicals. All boxers have regular brain-scans, Bill O'Neill, the BMA's science and research adviser, said he was pleased that Mr Banks admitted boxing was dangerous, but that "significant" changes to the regulations were needed. "There is no point in tampering around the edges."

Oliver is being kept sedated until the swelling subsides. James Palmer, the consultant neurosurgeon who operated for three hours to remove a blood clot from his brain, said Oliver's injuries were "potentially life-threatening" and his condition was critical.

Oliver has a two-year-old son, Kane, by his partner, Louise.

Mr Banks denied Saturday's fight was particularly savage. "It wasn't a grotesque spectacle," he said. "He wasn't battered nearly to death. The referee stepped in fairly speedily."

"One has to keep this in proportion. Thousands of young men are involved in boxing... most fights take place in total safety."

There has been criticism of the way the fight was promoted. Oliver was carried to the ring by crane, while a 100-strong choir sang the theme from the film *The Queen*. One commentator thought this may have shaken Spencer's concentration.

After being hit, he was given oxygen and stabilised. But while rushing him to Charing Cross hospital the doctor discovered the brain scanner was not working and there were no beds available.

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Fashanu 'victim' Aids test

Youth tells of under-age drinking, cannabis and bedroom assault

Lucy Patton

ATEENAGER who alleges he was sexually assaulted by former soccer star Justin Fashanu is to take an Aids test.

Fashanu's body was found in a lock-up garage in east London on Saturday after he fled the US following questioning by police over the 17-year-old's claims that he woke in Fashanu's bed to find the footballer performing a sex act on him after a night of drinking.

The youth told a Baltimore newspaper, the Sun, that he fled from the flat in tears after the alleged attack at the former £1 million striker's apartment in Maryland on the morning of March 25. He was very concerned about the health implications of what had happened and will take an Aids test today, the Sun reported.

The youth learned of Fashanu's death during the interview on Sunday. "I have a lot of mixed feelings," he told the Sun. "I feel that he did it to himself, but I'm also disgusted about what he did to me... I'm upset that I didn't get to see him go through trial, see justice. I didn't get to confront him, ask him why he did it."

Court documents state that a medical examination carried out on the youth after the alleged incident showed evidence of sexual assault.

Fashanu had moved to Elliott City to coach a new soccer side, Maryland Mania, when the pair met through mutual friends, the Sun reported. He was one of five teenagers who gathered to drink beer provided by the footballer — against state law on under-age drinking — on the night before the alleged attack. The youth also admitted smoking cannabis before going to sleep on a sofa at the apartment, the paper said.

Fashanu offered him a \$200-a-day (about £127) job, but did not give any details of what it might involve, he said. The offer greatly concerned his parents.

The footballer is understood to have been found hanged from rafters in a garage used as a car park in Shoreditch, east London. A post mortem examination proved inconclusive and further tests are being carried out.

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Soap operas 'can help to avoid family breakdown'

Ruaridh Nicoll

SOAP OPERAS ought to be used to promote healthy relationships and help reduce the annual £4 billion cost of family breakdown, Ed Straw, chairman of the charity Relate, argues in a study released today.

Mr Straw, the brother of Home Secretary and a partner in the accountants Coopers and Lybrand, is launching *Relative Values*, a study he has compiled with the think tank Demos, which calls for a national strategy to combat the breakdown in relationships and improve parents' ability to raise children.

Fewers were given counselling. Mr Straw argues that television and radio could be of enormous help in keeping people together.

"In the past soap opera scriptwriters have come to Relate... to add new angles to their soap operas," he writes.

"I believe we should use this vehicle much more explicitly, and provide scriptwriters with many more opportunities to deepen their awareness of relationship breakdown and its impacts."

He also called for around two hours of television programming a week to be dedicated to "relationship and parenting education and information".

The push would be part of a vast overall national strategy which would see a National Relationship and Parenting Service set up, along similar lines to the Family Planning Service.

The service would run a rolling programme to educate people on how to hold relationships together.

"It's about telling people how they can be happier and be better parents," said Mr Straw. "We pick up the costs of poor parenting and poor relationships throughout the social service system — in the financial and social costs of benefits, insurance, criminal justice, and drug and alcohol abuse."

Mr Straw points out that while public expenditure payments arising from broken homes approached £4 billion a year, the Government only paid £3 million a year to marital agencies trying to reverse marriage breakdowns.

He is very keen that his ideas are not seen as "family values" proposals, which in the past have invariably left the government proposing them imposed on its own infidelity.

"You won't find one mention of family or marriage in the study," he said. However he hopes the Government will consider his proposals in its working party on families.

Mr Straw's brother, Jack, once described as "extremely painful" the break-up of their parents' marriage when they were young.

'So many times, people break up when they don't need to'

"It seems to me that as a society our adult relationships are variable, we've never cracked child-rearing, and we're about as comfortable with sex as the average tortoise," he said.

"So many times, people break up when they don't need to."

Mr Straw believes that a campaign like the great Victorian push for universal education or, more recently, the demonisation of drunk drivers, needs to be set up and sustained for at least the next 30 years.

"One problem is that our collective knowledge of relationships and parenting is as rudimentary as our medical expertise was in the last century," he writes in the study.

"Opening up debate on how to improve our quality of relationships may seem as unsettling as it was for the Victorians to open up their bodies to new medical techniques."

Pointing out that programmes like the Abers were begun on BBC radio to educate farmers about food production, and citing an episode in *EastEnders* when the

Trrolley good... Supermarkets occupy five of the top six places for sales and took £47 billion last year, including three-quarters of spending on groceries



Trrolley good... Supermarkets occupy five of the top six places for sales and took £47 billion last year, including three-quarters of spending on groceries

Tesco knocks Sainsbury off No 1 perch

Roger Cowie

SAINSBURY is nursing its wounded pride after being displaced as Britain's biggest retailer.

Tesco had already overtaken Sainsbury in the British supermarket league, but until today Sainsbury was ahead overall because it also owns the Homebase do-it-yourself business and Shaws supermarkets in the United States.

But Tesco's faster supermarket growth, plus its expansion in Ireland and eastern Europe, has landed it the top spot, according to a review of British retailing, published today.

Tesco's total sales have reached £14.6 billion a year, while Sainsbury's are less than £13 billion.

The report, from a research group, Corporate Intelligence on Retailing, presents a detailed picture of butchers,

bakers, confectioners and every other kind of shopkeeper with sales last year of more than £3 million.

Of the 775, the smallest is the Norwich-based Butcher Group which owns two department stores with sales last year of £3,166,000. The 775 firms account for four-fifths of all retail sales, although there are 289,000 other shops in the country.

The report confirms that butchers and bakers, like most specialist shops, have been steadily losing to the large chains, especially supermarkets.

Total sales by butchers have slipped in every year of this decade; last year's total of £1.7 billion is 63 per cent of that of 1990. Bakers managed a small increase in sales last year, to £1.9 billion, but the figure is 10 per cent less than in 1990.

The Co-op has also failed to hold its own against the superstore giants. Takings from the movement's 4,600

shops grew by less than 6 per cent during the 1990s, little more than the average annual increase in retail sales.

The growing dominance of the large chains is the overriding message of the report. The top 10 chains account for half the total sales of all 775 companies in the report, and two-fifths of all shop spending in Britain.

Supermarkets occupy five of the top six places and between them recorded sales last year of £47 billion, including three-quarters of all spending on groceries.

Sandwiched among them is Marks & Spencer. Its £7.5 billion sales are barely half Tesco's, but it has the highest profits.

The trend to greater concentration shows no sign of slackening. There were 90 retail acquisitions last year, more than any other year in this decade, with buyers spending £3.2 billion, the highest figure since 1989. Foreign companies were prominent, buying UK

businesses such as Holland & Barrett, Lloyds Chemists and Books Etc. But they have some way to go before they break into the premier league; the Dutch store chain, C&A, remains the largest non-British group, at 24th between Storehouse and House of Fraser.

The report also features the charity sector, where there are more than 6,000 shops after steady growth over the past five years. Oxfam has most, 860, but that total has barely changed during the 1990s.

Others are catching up fast, with British Heart Foundation having doubled its chain to 350, and the British Red Cross closing fast on the third-placed Imperial Cancer Research Fund. The Sue Ryder chain remains the second largest, with 600 shops.

hold the record for selling most, an average of £268,000 each last year.

Boots has the most stores, with almost 2,500, but seven other groups have more than 1,000 shops.

Sainsbury has the most selling space.

Nichols Sounds, the hi-fi chain, sells most per square foot of space, more than four times as much as Sainsbury or Tesco.

Twenty-two retailers have sales of more than £1 billion.

The five top supermarket chains — Tesco, Sainsbury, Asda, Safeway and Somerfield — make almost three-quarters of all grocery sales. Tesco and Sainsbury alone account for two-fifths.

All the top 20 retailers are British. The largest foreign company is C&A, which is Dutch owned.

Check out your checkout

- The top 10 retailers take almost £4 of every £10 we spend in the shops.
- The most profitable shopkeeper is the pawnbroker Harvey & Thompson, which makes 44p on every £1 of sales.
- Marks & Spencer makes more profit than anybody else: £371 million last year.
- Harrods is easily Britain's biggest store at 800,000 square feet. Its staff also

News in brief

'NHS patients at risk' from millennium bug

MORE than a third of NHS trusts, hospitals and GP surgeries have not invested any money in tackling the millennium computer bug, a study revealed yesterday. The poll of more than 1,000 health service organisations shows that an average of just £15,000 has been spent in the NHS on dealing with the problem — and 36 per cent of those interviewed had spent nothing. The software company Prove It 2000, which commissioned the survey, claims it is now too late to fix the problem and warned that patients could be put at risk.

Managers must carry out a damage limitation exercise, it claims, giving priority to the most critical services and ensuring contingency plans are in place.

But the Department of Health rejected the comments, adding: "The NHS is on target and there will be a lot more done over the coming months as plans start to accelerate."

Richard Coppel, chief executive of Prove It 2000, said: "The thought that system critical equipment such as operating theatres have not been tested for year 2000 compliance chills me to the bone. We will call on the Government to act now to avert a disaster. The situation is far worse than we thought possible."

Elderly paying for care

ELDERLY people in private residential and nursing homes are mistakenly using their own savings to pay for accommodation and treatment when their care should be funded by local authorities, according to a study published yesterday.

It is unclear whether the errors are due to negligence or confusion over the regulations on long-term care funding which changed two years ago. But the result is that frail people are paying out unnecessarily, says the Joseph Rowntree Foundation which issued the report. There are more than 520,000 people in long-term residential or nursing homes.

In one instance, a man in his eighties whose wife has advanced stages of Alzheimer's disease and is incontinent, has been left to pay for his wife's care even though the couple have combined savings of just £2,500.

Fay Wright of the Age Concern Institute of Gerontology, who carried out the research, said: "Spouses whose partners enter residential or nursing homes seem especially prone to unfair treatment. Liability to contribute towards their partner's care is being interpreted in different ways, not only by different councils but also by different social workers under the same authority."

— Liz Stuart

More people retire early

PEOPLE are increasingly opting to take early retirement — in Britain's top companies, 80 per cent of employees did so last year — a survey disclosed yesterday. More than seven out of 10 left before they reached 60, the survey from the research group Incomes Data Services said. In some companies most employees quit before reaching 64.

Helen Sudell of IDS pensions service said: "People with occupational pensions are increasingly finding themselves able to afford to retire early — and who can blame them for doing so?"

Labels that stick in the mind

A FEW glasses of Pilsner Beer, with a bowl of Boskiglobs and milk on the morning after, may appeal to Europeans but mean nothing to the British. It is a question of brand names.

A new book, the *Directory of Consumer Brands and their Owners*, lists more than 54,000 brands in the UK and Europe. It shows that with a new brand launched nearly every day, there is pressure to find new names for products. The French enjoy Cracker Nut cereal and the Swedish a bowl of Friges, but the British are probably overlooking boxes of Chompos and Smacks. Popular beers in Denmark range from Aass-Fatol to Krudtleg, while Bic, widely known in the UK as a pen, is a brand of underwear in Ireland. And if you buy a Cortina in Germany, it will not be a Ford car but a frozen sweet.

Guide for Britain cool, with sunshine



Labour 'go integrity to council'

Bomb threat Belfast

The Guardian Tuesday May 5 1998

BRITAIN 5

Now and then

MANCHESTER
Then: "In Manchester, only a handful of Victorian Gothic buildings lend any grace to the cityscape."
Now: "Manchester, in particular, surprises many who don't expect to see beyond its dour industrial heritage."

NEWCASTLE
Then: "An earthy city distinguished by some fine Victorian buildings."
Now: "An earthy city distinguished by some fine Victorian buildings and a vibrant cultural scene and nightlife."

SHEFFIELD and LEEDS
Then: "Whereas Sheffield is still on its uppers, Leeds represents a less downbeat vision of urban decline."
Now: "A new vigour has suffused South and West Yorkshire during the last decade, and the city centre transformations of Leeds and Sheffield in particular have been remarkable."

DARLINGTON
Then: "As for the rest of Darlington [that is, apart from what the guide called the 'strangely timeless' railway museum], there is little else of interest."
Now: "While it may not be famous, you can sip a cappuccino at one of several cafes and pubs which spill tables outside at the first hint of sunshine."

A spokeswoman for the guide said the new edition acknowledged "the huge renewal which has transformed some rundown industrial areas into places worth a visit". The next edition, however, is still impatiently awaited by places like Liverpool — which it describes as "the symbol of a nation in decline" — and the "moribund resort" of Herne Bay, in Kent.

Guide finds Britain cool, with sunshine



Sheffield's supertram (top left), Newcastle still lively after dark (above left) and the historic quay at Hartlepool, a leading attraction for visitors to the town



PHOTOGRAPHS: DENIS THORPE, DON McPHEE and RICHARD RAYNER

Martin Wainwright

GOVERNMENT spin doctors have been given a helping hand as they mark a year of Labour in power, by a transformation in the famously sceptical Rough Guide's view of England.

The nitty-gritty series of practical handbooks, which makes a feature of lambasting

poor service or dreary resorts, has re-focused its image of a country in decline to a place with a decidedly upbeat air.

Acknowledging the change of government, the latest edition of the guide has also deluged for the first time to include Hartlepool — the constituency of Labour's chief image-maker Peter Mandelson. From a brief aside about "depressed and unsightly in-

dustrial towns", the port has blossomed to earn a complete section, along with nearby Darlington, where the guide has discovered cappuccino and sunshine.

The previous edition of the £12.99 book, rivalled only by Lonely Planet as the cool young tourist's guide to Britain, was criticised two years ago for repeating downbeat clichés and painting a generally gloomy picture of Eng-

land. Apart from historic monuments, the 12 authors wrote, the country offered a lousy climate, laughable indigenous cuisine and the fractious core of a United Kingdom in mid-identity crisis.

The new guide, one of an American-owned series covering more than 80 countries, celebrates "the genuine changes in atmosphere" caused by the first new government for 18 years. The introduction adds: "There's a lot of talk about the importance of society, a concept much abused during the years of Thatcherism."

Friendlier feelings towards Europe — and European travellers — are also noted, although sections on the allegedly deep conservatism of the English have survived intact from the first edition. The standard warning on the natives' delight in discussing

Labour 'gold standard' integrity test imposed on council candidates

Anne Perkins
Political Correspondent

LABOUR is introducing a rigorous screening procedure for all council candidates to weed out future dissidents and those with a potentially embarrassing past. After a series of damaging Labour local government corruption cases in the past year, the leadership is determined to try to minimise the danger.

"We're not vetting people on their politics," a Labour spokesman insisted last night. "But if they're going to be selected as Labour candidates we need to make sure they have a grip on the practicalities."

to tidy their behaviour. To make sure candidates will not try to take their council down the old, high-spend, high-taxing route which led to bitter confrontations between central government and councils like Lambeth and Liverpool in the 1980s, they will have to commit themselves to the Government's Best Value programme of price and quality testing in local government services.

The questionnaire has already been piloted for candidates in two London boroughs, Lambeth and Lewisham, for Thursday's local

elections. Lambeth in particular became notorious in the 1980s for incompetence and corruption disguised under a cloak of Old Labour doctrinal purity.

Now, after using the selection procedures to be prescribed for the whole country next year, Lambeth is being held up as a shining example of New Labour probity, as the party struggles to prevent the Liberal Democrats, already the largest group, taking overall control.

Several sitting councillors were deselected in Lambeth after they failed the "quality control" element of the new procedure. Among other hurdles the potential candidate must cross is an undertaking to meet the standards laid down by the Nolan committee relating to financial probity.

Bomb threat re-routes Belfast marathon

John Mullen
Ireland Correspondent

TERRORISTS forced the re-routing of the Belfast marathon yesterday after apparently aiming two mortar bombs at an RUC station. Neither hit the intended target.

The remains of launchers were found in west Belfast. It would be a significant development if dissidents felt confident enough to mount an attack from an IRA stronghold.

The target appeared to be Grosvenor Road police station. An explosion was heard late on Sunday and 100 families were evacuated as a security operation swung into action at first light.



The Sixth Spice Girl? Dream on.

Sally Ann has a bomb-belly. When she grows up she wants to be a Spice Girl. Is she crazy? Kidding herself? Or is she just like any other nine year old.

Sally Ann's disability may not hamper her thoughts or dreams, but in reality it does affect her ability to control her movement. And it changes the way others view her.

Scope realise that children like her need extra support to give them an equal chance in life. That's why we work with local groups and families to ensure access to education and later help with housing and employment.

We want disabled children to be given the same scope of opportunity as everyone else. During the first week of June

Please phone us on 0500 575 022 for your free information pack

SCOPE

Turmoil in the Balkans

Fighting rages in Kosovo

Jonathan Steele in Pristina

THE sound of heavy gunfire rumbled across the fields of western Kosovo yesterday as Serb forces continued the counter-attack launched after five policemen were ambushed and wounded by ethnic Albanian separatist guerrillas in the border village of Pousevce.

Reporters were barred from the area, which is a few miles from the Albanian border, but an independent radio station in Belgrade claimed that more than 100 guerrillas were surrounded by Serb troops.

The second day of fighting confirmed that a long strip of territory parallel to the border and on both sides of the main road from Pec to Pristina has become a second zone of heightened confrontation in the Kosovo conflict.

Until three weeks ago the main centre of tension was Drenica, about 20 miles from the capital, Pristina, and a long way from Albania. But the increasing flow of arms into Kosovo along isolated mountain tracks from Albania has led the Yugoslav president, Slobodan Milosevic, to send hundreds of troops and paramilitary police to the western part of the province, which is nominally part of Serbia, though most of its people are Albanian.

The new Serb deployments create extra potential targets for guerrillas of the Kosovo Liberation Army.

"We're moving towards a deeply dangerous war. These are no longer just conscripts in the army for a year," said Mahmut Bakalli, a member of the Kosovo political leadership.

"The Serbs are mobilising reservists with considerable experience from fighting in Bosnia and Croatia."

Although the Yugoslav army claims that its priority is to seal the border and prevent arms smuggling, many observers fear that it is poised to strike at the scores of villages on Kosovo's western rim.

Hundreds of Albanian peasants and many Serbs have fled the area in recent days.

The polarisation of the two communities is growing stronger in Pristina, where Albanians staged another protest march yesterday for the 25th consecutive day.

Albanians say their Serb neighbours no longer speak to them.

"Mistrust is growing on both sides. The change is noticeable," said a foreign official who recently returned to Kosovo after three weeks away.

On Sunday a crowd of around 200 Albanians gathered for a funeral on the outskirts of Kacanik, a town close to the southern border



Albanian children hold a painting of ethnic Albanian leader Ibrahim Rugova at a protest in Brussels calling for the EU and Nato to intervene in Kosovo. PHOTOGRAPH: JEFFREY LAMPERT

with no recent history of trouble. They were mourning a man shot dead at the weekend after he accused an Albanian neighbour of being a collaborator.

The killer, who has since fled, was a member of the Serb police reserve and an open supporter of Mr Milosevic's Socialist Party of Serbia.

He was one of the few Albanians who accept the Serb call for political talks.

The main Albanian parties have rejected the invitation to dialogue. They say negotiations must take place with foreign mediation and be held with representatives of the Yugoslav federation, as a sign of the Albanian majority's in-

sistence that Kosovo province cannot remain in Serbia.

About 90 per cent of Kosovo's 1.8 million people are ethnic Albanians. Most want independence, peacefully if they can get it but by force if not.

Belgrade has ruled the province with a heavy hand since 1989, when Mr Milosevic revoked Kosovo's autonomy.

Departures signal crisis in Croatia

Ian Traynor in Bonn

CROATIA was bracing itself for a power struggle last night after the death of the defence minister, Gojko Susak, and the resignation of the head of President Franjo Tudjman's office, Hrvoje Sarinic.

The departure of two key figures in the seven-year-old state signals a battle in the ruling elite for the country's future.

President Tudjman, aged 75, has intestinal cancer, and the gloves appear to be coming off in the fight for control of his Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), which is split between hardline nationalists who covet a slice of Bosnia and moderates keen to curb nationalist excess to gain favour with the West.

Susak's death at the age of 53 after a three-year struggle with lung cancer deprived the HDZ of its deputy leader and chief hawk.

He was the leading proponent of a "Greater Croatia" policy which envisaged dividing Bosnia between Zagreb and Belgrade and annexing a region that includes his native town, Slinski Brijuni.

With his death the hard-line Bosnian Croat lobby, which remains highly influential in Zagreb, has lost its key backer and protector in the corridors of power. The arrival of younger and more liberal figures at the top of the HDZ could hasten return to Croatia of deported Serbs and improve the chances of a more durable peace in Bosnia.

The unexpected resignation of Mr Sarinic suggests, however, that such prospects remain on hold.

A former prime minister, he quit after losing a battle over the fate of Dubrovacka Banka, the country's 5th biggest bank which collapsed last month.

Leading HDZ figures, many of them implicated in crooked deals taking place under the guise of privatisation, are widely believed to have engineered the bank's collapse.

Another Tudjman adviser, Ivica Paskalic, also a radical Bosnian Croat na-

tionalist, is said to have been working for the bank's collapse so that it could be sold off cheaply to a party crony.

Mr Sarinic opposed the manoeuvring and was demanding an inquiry into Mr Paskalic's activities. The resignation was seen as evidence that he had lost.

With the opposition badly fragmented and by turn



Gojko Susak: Key backer of the hardline faction

courted and then rebuffed by the ruling party, the power struggle in the HDZ will determine Croatia's direction.

Last week's bombing of refugee Serbs and the torching of their homes in the south-western town of Drvar, and the repeated recent dismissal of Western calls for more co-operation from Zagreb, indicate that the hardliners remain on top.

Susak was born into an uncompromising nationalist area of Bosnia-Herzegovina at the end of the second world war, and emigrated from communist Yugoslavia to Canada.

Susak raised the funds for Mr Tudjman's drive to power in 1990 and returned from exile a year later when he was rewarded with the defence portfolio.

Despite his hardline views, he developed a close relationship with the Americans, who helped him to build a Croatian army from scratch.

World news in brief

Suharto gets tough with protesters

INDONESIA'S armed forces commander said yesterday that the student-led nationwide protest movement against President Suharto was collapsing into anarchy in some areas and that he had ordered further street protests to be met with "stern action".

Fifty people were injured and many students arrested as riot police in three cities fought with protesters, amid the worst economic crisis in 30 years. Further trouble is expected after the government yesterday raised fuel and electricity prices by 70 per cent. — John Aglionby, Jakarta.

Hijacker welcomed home

ABU ABBAS, a leader of the Palestinian Liberation Front who hijacked the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro in 1985, was given a hero's reception when he arrived back in the Palestinian-controlled Gaza Strip at the weekend.

Mr Abbas intends to settle in Gaza and authorisation for his return was granted by senior Israeli government officials following a request by the Palestinian secret service, according to the Hebrew newspaper Yedioth Aharanot.

An American Jewish passenger, Leon Klinghoffer, was killed during the hijacking. — David Sharrock, Jerusalem.

Algerian roadblock murders

SUSPECTED Islamic militants manning a fake official roadblock cut the throats of 11 Algerian civilians in the Khemis Miliana area, south of the capital, on Friday, while troops killed 80 Muslim rebels in military operations in four regions during the past six days. Algerian newspapers said. — Reuters, Paris.

Chickens pecked to death

THOUSANDS of battery chickens in Denmark have died in recent days from suffocation or after being pecked to death by others as they grew too large for their cramped quarters, the Danish Poultry Council complained yesterday. The country's general strike has shut poultry abattoirs.

The unions say they will allow chickens to be slaughtered if farmers give about 40p a time to a cancer charity. The poultry council says it will not accept "blackmail". — AP, Copenhagen.

UN chief hits back

REJECTING accusations in the New Yorker magazine that he failed to act on the impending genocide in Rwanda, despite being given detailed warnings, the United Nations secretary-general, Kofi Annan, described the paralysis of the UN's peacekeeping in 1994 as a lack of political will, not a lack of information.

Mr Annan said he agreed with his commanding officer that if he had had "but one reinforced brigade — that's 5,000 men — I could have saved hundreds of thousands of lives". But he did not have the backing of member states to send in peacekeeping troops. — Lucy Hannan, Nairobi.

Sudan peace talks open

SUDAN'S peace talks open today in Nairobi with both the government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army warning that it will be difficult to achieve a ceasefire in the 14-year war.

But UN agencies say Khartoum's lifting of access restrictions to southern areas facing acute food shortages will allow relief flights to increase "threefold". — Lucy Hannan, Nairobi.

Hutu rebels killed

AT LEAST 11 people died when Hutu rebels attacked a military position in southern Burundi, the army said. It said 10 rebels and one soldier were killed during Saturday's attack in Rubumba, 50 miles south of the capital. — Reuters, Bujumbura.

Khmer Rouge dash to safety

Khmer Rouge soldiers and their families drive an ox-cart full of their belongings across the border into Thailand yesterday as they escape a government onslaught in northern Cambodia. Nearly 30,000 Khmer Rouge followers have fled to Cambodia so far.

Prince Norodom Ranariddh returned to Cambodia from exile yesterday to prepare his royalist party for the elections on July 26 called by his rival, Hun Sen, who deposed him as joint prime minister in a coup last July.

PHOTOGRAPH: WALLY SANTANA

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PHOTOGRAPH: WALLY SANTANA

Till death us do part, or not

NEIGHBOURS became concerned when an elderly resident of their block of flats in Tarragona in north-eastern Spain was sighted constantly without her husband. They became suspicious when a pungent smell started to waft from the childless couple's door.

Unwilling to be separated from her partner for life, the woman had kept her husband, who had died aged 83, in a wardrobe for six weeks after his death, a police spokesman said yesterday.

The autopsy showed that Juan José Pérez Fernández died of natural causes in mid-March. But his body had lain in the cupboard until last week.

"They were a very united couple without children. It is a love story," the police spokesman said. — AP, Tarragona.

Peace envoy leaves Cyprus in despair

John Hooper, Southern Europe Correspondent

THE man who ended the Bosnian war blamed the Turkish Cypriot administration yesterday for the failure of the most keenly awaited Cyprus peace initiative since the division of the island 24 years ago.

After three days travelling between the leaders of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities, Richard Holbrooke, the United States envoy, told a press conference before leaving the island: "If progress is to be made, both sides must be willing to engage in give-and-take in serious negotiations. This is not the current situation. This is especially true for the Turkish Cypriots."

The fact that the Cyprus

problem should have defeated the man who brought peace to Bosnia will reinforce its reputation as perhaps the world's most intractable diplomatic conundrum.

Mr Holbrooke's inability to make headway also leaves the eastern Mediterranean drifting towards another war. In August the Cyprus government, which is composed exclusively of Greek Cypriots and administers the southern 60 per cent of the island, is to take delivery of a consignment of surface-to-air missiles from Russia. Turkey has

warned it may use force to prevent their deployment. Greece has said it would regard such an attack as cause for war with Turkey.

Mr Holbrooke's mission was intended to nip this crisis in the bud by getting the two communities back to the negotiating table. But he was thwarted by demands from the Turkish Cypriot leader, Rauf Denktaş.

They included recognition of his self-declared republic in the north, an end to its economic isolation and the cancellation by the Cyprus gov-

ernment of its membership talks with the European Union.

Mr Holbrooke said: "The Turkish Cypriot insistence that the Greek Cypriots withdraw their application for EU membership is not a realistic position."

On the issue of recognition, Mr Denktaş was as so often in the past — taking a harder line than Ankara. Last week Turkey softened its position by saying international recognition of the breakaway "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" was not a precondition for resuming talks.

Mr Holbrooke said his mission had not been helped by the EU, which sent Turkey's application for EU membership to the back of a long queue. "It is that imbalance which I believe has led to the present impasse," he said.

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War of words thunders over paradise islands

Helena Smith in Athens

TWO TOURISTS they are paradise islands in the sun, only a boat ride away from throbbing resorts like Kos.

But to Greece and Turkey the four Aegean isles have become the latest source of friction to bedevil relations at a critical time for peace

talks on Cyprus — the most contentious island of all. Twenty-eight months after Athens and Ankara almost went to war over two barren clusters off the Turkish coast, Turkey has raised passions by challenging Greek sovereignty of Fourni, Apollonisi, Farmakonisi and Psarimos.

The four islands lie on the eastern edge of the oil-

rich sea. Despite their being inhabited by Hellenes for decades, Ankara now claims them, citing the "vague wording" of the treaties that handed them to Greece between 1923 and 1947.

It has increased military exercises in the region. Scores of fighter jets swoop over the islands daily.

Greece's foreign minis-

ter, Theodore Pangalos, has not minced his words. Egged on by the islanders and the governing Socialists in Athens, who quip that "Ankara will be wiping the Acropolis next", he snapped: "Turkey lacks seriousness. It clearly wants to change the status quo in the Aegean. These claims are both absurd and dangerous."

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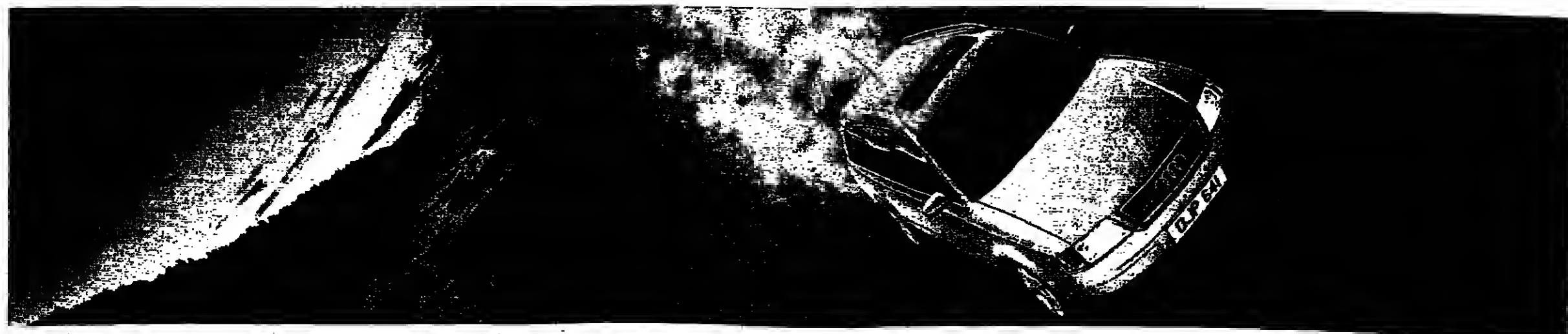
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Revolt against bank decision

Fallout after euro-fudge

Martin Walker in Brussels

A POLITICAL revolt against the summit deal on the European central bank, which will run the euro, was under way last night as concern about the markets' verdict changed to alarm at the reaction of voters.

The campaign for tomorrow's Dutch general election, which had been moving placidly towards the expected re-election of Wim Kok's centre-left coalition, was electrified when the opposition parties demanded an emergency parliamentary debate. And in Denmark and Ireland, where referendums later this month on the Amsterdam treaty already face difficulty, opponents seized on the central bank stitch-up to invigorate their campaigns.

In Brussels, the outrage of leaders on both left and right will provoke the first serious constitutional clash between the European Parliament and national governments when MEPs hold their hearings on the new bank board this week.

Parliamentary leaders, claiming that the Maastricht treaty guarantees of the bank's independence have been breached, threaten to reject the Dutch candidate Wim Duisenberg's appointment to a four-year half-term as head of the bank.

"This is a unique occasion, when the parliament stands with public opinion and actually has the power to do some-

thing," the leader of the British Conservative MEPs, Edward Macmillan Scott, said as Labour and Tory MEPs both attacked the deal brokered by Tony Blair early on Sunday morning.

Pauline Green, a Labour MEP and leader of the parliamentary socialist group, overcame her usual rock-solid loyalty to the New Labour government to condemn the deal and insist on the Maastricht treaty pledge of the

The Dutch opposition leader condemned Wim Kok for suffering 'this defeat at French hands'

bank's independence being respected.

The price Mr Duisenberg had to pay for his temporary post, she said, "makes you want to launch a campaign to free the Frankfurt One". She demanded a formal opinion from the legal service of the European Parliament on whether the Duisenberg deal was valid.

"Parliament cannot stand for this," said the German Social Democrat MEP Christa Randzio-Plath, chair of parliament's monetary committee which will grill Mr Duisenberg on Thursday.

The French president, Jacques Chirac, held out against Mr Duisenberg's appointment for eight years, and insisted that when the euro came into circulation the ECB should be run by a Frenchman with a full eight-year term.

The first indication that European voters are taking the matter seriously will come in tomorrow's general election in the Netherlands. Demanding the recall of parliament for an emergency debate, the opposition leader, Jasp de Hoop Scheffer, condemned the prime minister, Wim Kok, for suffering "this defeat at French hands".

Opinion polls before the weekend suggested that Mr Kok's coalition of Social Democrats, the liberal VVD and the non-ideological D-66 reformers would be comfortably re-elected. Until the Duisenberg row, the only questions were whether the D-66 vote would drop so much that the party would fall out of the coalition and whether the VVD would do well enough to take over its leadership.

That may now change, given the VVD leader Pits Bolkestein's attack on the French for "always playing the same game, proving their enormous influence in Europe". "Things turned out just as I feared," added Mr Bolkestein, who has repeatedly put his coalition under strain with his scepticism of euro undermined by French politics and Italian debt.

Criticism mounts, page 12

Sicher in die Welt von morgen



'Safely into the world of tomorrow' reads the ill-chosen slogan at the German chancellor's post-summit press conference in Bonn. PHOTOGRAPH: FRITZ RESS

Kohl comes under fire from all sides for his 'historic' agreement

CHANCELLOR Helmut Kohl defended his capitulation to French demands on the single European currency as a "historic compromise" yesterday as a political backlash in Germany further reduced his chances of re-election in September.

Writes Ian Traynor in Bonn: The opposition Social Democrats demanded an emergency debate in parliament tomorrow on the decision to split the term of the

European central bank's president. "It damages confidence in the euro if the new currency's launch begins with a violation of the Maastricht treaty," said Gerhard Schröder, Mr Kohl's challenger in September. "It turns my stomach. It is definitely not good for the new currency's credibility."

Mr Kohl's allies were also critical of the fudge, which was opposed by the Bundes-

bank chief, Hans Tietmeyer. "A nightmare," and "a disaster," said Bild, the main tabloid. The business daily Handelsblatt said: "The euro could hardly have had a worse launch."

The main German banks, the federation of German industry and the chambers of commerce all reacted sceptically to the Brussels decision. Theo Waigel, the finance minister sought to provide reassurance that

the new bank's independence was secure. But he is also head of Bavaria's ruling Christian Social Union and has a tough Bavarian election to fight in September.

European Christian Democrats gathered in Berlin last night under Mr Kohl's leadership in rally to the euro's support, but many Germans are deeply unhappy about forfeiting their cherished mark.

France hails Front's setback

Jon Henley in Paris

THE National Front's surprise loss at the weekend of its only parliamentary seat, in its southern stronghold Toulon, was hailed yesterday as a victory for French democracy and a setback to the ambitions of the far right movement.

"This was a victory for the Socialists, not a victory for the united left," the Socialist party general secretary, François Hollande, said. "It was a victory for all those who really wanted to deal a blow to the National Front."

Mr Hollande and observers said the Socialist candidate, Odette Casanova, a retired teacher, had benefited in the run-off from the votes of moderate rightwingers, whose candidate was eliminated in the first round.

"It's undoubtedly a heavy blow to the Front," said Jean Lambert, a political scientist at the Sorbonne. "Many traditional rightwing supporters voted to stop them, and to express anger at the power-sharing deals struck after the regional elections. The far right is now without representation at the national level."

France's orthodox right collapsed in squabbling factions after the regional elections in March, when the National Front polled more than 18 per cent of the votes to become kingmaker in several regional councils.

Dissidents defied party bans on alliances with the National Front in three of France's 22 regions to hold on to council presidencies.

The National Front candidate, Cécile Le Chevallier, wife of the local mayor, had been tipped to win the by-election, called earlier this year after her husband Jean-Marie was disqualified from holding a parliamentary seat for corrupt financial irregularities.

Complaining of "multiple irregularities" in the vote, Mrs Le Chevallier said she would ask the constitutional council to order a fresh poll because the result was so close — only 39 votes separated the two candidates.

But Mrs Casanova said her victory meant "light at the end of the tunnel" for Toulon, one of four southern towns controlled by the National Front.

The Le Chevalliers and their staff are embroiled in a dozen lawsuits over allegations of nepotism and corruption.

Seven on trial for killing that shook French politics

Jon Henley in Paris

THE mysterious case of "Yann Piat," the only member of parliament to be murdered in France's Fifth Republic, came to court yesterday, more than four years after she was gunned down on a country road by suspected hired assassins.

Expected to last five weeks, the hearings into one of the most sinister incidents in modern French politics will take two former cabinet ministers and several local politicians bosses into the witness-box.



Lucien Ferri, a small-time criminal, allegedly fired the shots that killed Yann Piat. PHOTOGRAPH: GEORGES GORET

and throw an uncomfortable light on the alleged links between prominent Riviera politicians and organised crime.

A helicopter hovered overhead yesterday and 150 riot police surrounded the court in the southern town of Draguignan where seven local men, all well known to the police, are standing trial for the murder.

Piat, aged 44, was shot three times by two men on a powerful motorbike on the night of February 25 1994 as her chauffeur was driving her to her villa in Mont das Oiseaux, near Toulon.

Alleged to have been on the 750cc bike are Lucien

Ferri, aged 26, and Marco Di Caro, aged 25, who has admitted driving but says Mr Ferri fired the gun.

They were arrested on June 14 1994 with four suspected accomplices, also in their twenties — Stéphane Chiarisoli, Olivier Tomasone, Stéphane Guechguich and Romann Gressier. The alleged mastermind of the hit, Gerard Finaud, a restaurant owner aged 38, was picked up the same day.

But the prosecution has yet to find a convincing explanation why a gang of small-time local criminals should want to assassinate an MP, and there is widespread belief that whoever ordered the killing is still at large.

"Of course the defendants will be heavily punished, but this trial will not reveal who benefited from the murder," said Mr Di Caro's lawyer, Jean-Louis Kelta.

Piat had campaigned against corruption in the Riviera area, and had also made many political enemies by switching her allegiance from the far-right National Front to the conservative RPR.

In a letter she wrote in 1992, which she said was to be opened should she suffer "a fatal accident", she named five people she feared, including an ex-cabinet minister, an underworld godfather who was killed months before she died, and a former terrorist.

The case, with its exotic aura of Mediterranean violence, corruption and intrigue, has gripped France for the past four years, prompting even President Jacques Chirac to say it "challenged the proper working of our democracy and the rule of law".

Earlier this year two journalists were convicted of slander and sentenced to heavy fines for claiming that two ex-cabinet ministers with Riviera constituencies had ordered the assassination, and that a secret service hit squad carried it out.

In their book, The Yann Piat Affair, published at the House of Power, André Rougeot and Michel Verno quoted an unnamed retired army intelligence general as saying that Piat was killed because she had uncovered plans to sell army land near Fréjus to Mafia-linked developers.

Among the 150 witnesses to be called to testify at the Piat trial are the former defence minister and mayor of Fréjus François Léotard, the former urban affairs minister and mayor of Marseille Jean-Claude Gaudin, along with a number of local politicians who are on trial on separate corruption charges. They include Michel Mouillot, the mayor of Cannes, and Maurice Arreckx, a former senator and mayor of Toulon.

'City' rises on the sands

Foreign staff

MORE than 3,000 homeless people have occupied a stretch of vacant land in Cape Town, proclaimed it "Freedom City", and dared the city's largely ANC council to try to evict them.

The homeless, some of whom have been on housing waiting lists for 15 years, occupied the land at Tafelsig about 10 days ago. Yesterday the high court in Cape Town forbade their eviction until it has held a full hearing into the dispute, due to begin on Friday.

Their confrontation with armed police, the city, and the National Party-controlled provincial government highlights South Africa's housing crisis. In Cape Town alone 31,000 families are on waiting lists.

The squatters have rejected offers of help from political parties, saying they are "not interested in being used as a political football".



Homeless children outside their shelter in 'Freedom City' squatter camp near Cape Town. PHOTOGRAPH: SASA KRALJ

Coup arms 'paid for by financier'

Owen Bowcott and Richard Norton-Taylor

A FUGITIVE Indian financier with links to the Saudi arms dealer Adnan Khashoggi has emerged as a key figure in the use of a British mercenary firm to help overthrow the West African military junta in Sierra Leone.

Rakesh Saxena, who is being held in Canada, is alleged to have helped finance a \$1.5 million (\$900,000) deal for Lieutenant-Colonel Tim Spicer, head of the London-based security company Sandline International, to ship arms from Bulgaria to West Africa.

The plan to overthrow the junta leader, Major Johnny Paul Koroma, is being investigated by the Customs and Excise after allegations that senior British officials were involved in the operation.

Sandline said it was acting "with the approval of Her Majesty's government". The planned intervention intended to restore Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, the elected president of Sierra Leone, who was deposed by the junta last year. "Accordingly no offence had been committed," a Sandline spokeswoman said.

President Kabbah has since

been restored to power. Last night Sandline confirmed Mr Saxena's involvement. "Saxena entered an agreement with Kabbah so that Kabbah could raise the funds," the spokeswoman said.

Although Sandline had a separate contract with Kabbah, the first payment was made by Mr Saxena direct to Sandline, she added.

Mr Saxena, who has extensive mining interests in Sierra Leone, was originally arrested by Canadian police in July 1996 on a Thai extradition warrant. The Bangkok authorities charged him, Mr Khashoggi and three others with money-laundering offences unrelated to West Africa.

Mr Khashoggi has denied the allegations, saying he was a victim of fraud in Thailand. Mr Saxena, former treasurer adviser at the Bangkok Bank of Commerce, allegedly embezzled \$68 million.

According to the newsletter Africa Confidential, Mr Saxena paid Sandline \$1.5 million as a first instalment for the supply of arms to Sierra Leone militias supporting the ousted president. A second sum of \$3.5 million was never paid.

While on bail in Canada, Mr Saxena apparently continued arranging the counter-

coup. Last year the Vancouver Sun published details of letters allegedly sent to Mr Saxena by an aide to the exiled President Kabbah. "What is needed is the strategy, logistics and training that would convert the 40,000 militia into an effective fighting force," wrote the aide.

According to the paper, Col Spicer wrote to Mr Saxena: "You have asked for assistance with a military appreciation of the credible options of the government. We are certainly able to assist."

"As you are aware, we have unique expertise and knowledge of the country, already have a very good relationship with the government and have the resources to implement any project the government decides on in an effective, timely manner with minimum collateral damage."

The elevation of Hank in People's online poll has irritated some of the magazine's top brass. But there seems to be some method in the madness. Hank supporters argue that their vote is a gesture of rebellion at the mainstream media and the cult of celebrity it encourages.

"The media tells us what food to eat, what movies to see, what music to listen to, who to vote for politically and what kind of people are attractive enough to have relations with!" wrote one Hank supporter in a discussion forum on People's web site.

Representatives of People were adamant last week that Hank would never make the cover. "Frankly, I think it's stupid," said an irritated Susan Tnepper, People's executive editor.

But Dan Okrent, editor of People's parent company, Time Inc., said the magazine's web site would honour its promise to give the winner a home page.

Horrible Hank upsets 'beautiful people' list

Mark Tran in New York

LEONARDO DiCaprio, the Titanic star, predictably adorned the cover of People magazine's "50 Most Beautiful People" issue this week. But its online poll on the same subject has thrown up an unlikely favourite: Hank, the Angry Drunken Dwarf.

Hank may be unknown to most Americans but he has achieved cult status by his appearances on "shock rock" Howard Stern's New York radio show.

The curmudgeonly and loutish Hank has been featured in a drunken stupor and vomiting on himself. Despite — or because — of his downmarket image, he has gathered about 208,000 votes, 17 times more than the second-placed megastar DiCaprio.

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Diary

Ian Aitken

I S Red Ken trying to get through to Number Ten? Or is there a deal in the offing over him running for mayor of London? Something must be going on, because this supreme *blat* of Blair's spin doctors has been striving to make it clear that he'd be a good boy if he gets the job. Last week he said so not only once but twice. The first occasion was in the pages of the leftwing weekly, *Tribune*. Under the heading "I'm your man", Mr Livingstone first elaborated the dire consequences of rising New Labour's selection procedures so as to shut him out. Such a dastardly scheme, he argued, would not only give the Tories the moral high ground, raising the possibility that Jeffrey Archer might actually win; it would also make it possible for any one of Labour's 80,000 card-carrying members in London to take the party to court. Intriguingly, he then added: "A Tory mayor could not resist the chance to use this as a platform to harass the Labour government in the run-up to the next general election. A Labour mayor could build a consensus that can persuade Tony Blair to give us the resources to tackle our problems." "That was Wednesday. But perhaps Ken feared that *Tribune* wasn't being read as carefully in Downing Street as it should be — or even that he didn't make himself clear. So on Saturday he said it again, only louder, in the *Guardian*. Ostensibly addressing Lord Archer rather than the Prime Minister, he wrote: "I fear you could be persuaded by the extremely rightwing leadership of the Tory party to use the new authority as a platform to attack the Labour Government. As a good friend of Tony Blair, and sharing his aspirations for the British people, this is a mistake I am unlikely to make." It's cheeky, but not even Gerald Kaufman could misunderstand it.

If there really is a deal in the offing, it would be common sense on Blair's part. Your diarist was out on the doorknocker last week, canvassing for a Yes vote in the referendum as well as for Labour in the borough elections. And if the party pandemonium really do intend to block Livingstone, I have bad news for them. For the voters are frankly bored by the local elections, and it is only the idea of getting an elected mayor which lights a spark of interest. But the trouble for Blair is that the only name anyone mentions is Red Ken's. They like him — even people with a Ferrari parked outside. Coupled with Livingstone's bluffs-dox to Blair, that adds up to a message no sane politician could ignore. I predict a deal.

FANS of the House of Lords say its debates are much better than those in the Commons. How true, as last Thursday's debate proved yet again. They were discussing a plan to "modernise" the ceremony for introducing new peers — a ritual which requires candidates to dress up in daff robes and parade round the chamber behind a man in a top hat. The modernisation plan daringly suggests that... well, that they should abandon the hat. But even this was too much for some peers — hence the debate. Tory Baroness Wilcox told the House: "At the age of seven I became a Brownie. I stood by in a splendid uniform, hands up in the special salute, making my Brownie promise before Brown Owl, who was looming large and important with my parents proudly standing by. Special ceremonies, moments marked and recorded, mean a life forever changed. No, honestly — it's all in *Hansard*."

UNLIKE Livingstone's letters, it wasn't hard to interpret the (final?) column of the Independent's award-winning television critic, David Aaronovitch. After noting the incongruity of Ol Simpson being interviewed by Ruby Wax, he wrote: "Pretty soon we'll have the editor of one of those tabloid 'lifestyle' supplements running the Independent. But no, that would be ridiculous." The new editor of the *Indy* is Simon Kelner, the editor of the tabloid 'lifestyle' supplement of the *Daily Mail*.

Matthew Norman is away



The first mayor of London may be good for Blair — or may haunt him

Hugo Young



THE ideal model of British democracy is intensely authoritarian. It exalts control above pretty well every other value. Though Parliament is mouthed as the seat of power, a leader who fails to exert his will over the Commons on every occasion is damned as one who can't cut it. In this model, the making of deals, like the prostituting of other chieftains, is aberrant rather than admirable conduct, proving the prime minister to be feeble and, if the pattern persists, worthy of immediate dismissal. Such a formation runs very deep among both leaders and led, and means, for example, that the horse-trading which preceded the weekend appointment of Wim Duisenberg to run the European Central Bank seemed, to Anglo-Saxons, indescribably appalling.

But the authoritarian model is about to inflict upon itself a challenge closer to home. On Thursday, a referendum will be held in London which seems certain to say Yes to a directly-elected mayor and assembly, and thereby to remove a medium of authority from the all-mighty parliamentary centre. The mayor will become a politician of national renown, with the largest personal mandate in the country. This is Tony Blair's doing, and, at first sight, gives grounds for believing he is that unusual phenomenon, a leader interested in shedding rather than accumulating power. I think it would be more accurate to conjecture something less biastre but just as important: that this manoeuvre exposes the tension — which is the unresolved question at the heart of his political personality — between Blair the delegator and Blair the supreme

controller. He does believe in de-centralising. In Scotland, he may have had no choice, but in London nobody that mattered was exerting any pressure at all. Absurd though the present set-up is, whereby the capital has nobody to speak for it, hardly anyone in the Cabinet was bothered, and some, like Frank Dobson, were quite opposed to an elected mayor. Blair's own belief springs in part from an awareness of the democratic deficit, but perhaps more from a positive desire that big new political jobs might excite new political leaders, and thus resuscitate not only the people's faith in politics but the power of localities to create their own legitimacy.

Let a thousand flowers bloom, he seems to say. After London, there will surely be other places that want to follow its example. The people will speak, and thereby revive democracy. Just as important, the old sweat of party politics, driving their corrupt machines, may give way to new charismatic, fit for a more populist, anti-party, mass-consensus age which features, as the white paper on London revealingly puts it, "a more inclusive and less confrontational style of politics".

Such people, if they emerge, would be a challenge to the supreme leader. But not, it emerges, too much of one; and not quite yet. For the other Blair, known as the control freak, is watching his back. Not only will the London assembly have little money to play with, and very modest power to override the mayor, who will himself have less power than influence, but the personages available to fill that post will, it turns out, be strictly screened. It's a reflection of the terrible state of Conservative politics that

Lord Archer, truly a personage, is the front runner for the Tory nomination. Here is the first opportunity for a high-profile fight against the Blairite hegemony, and such serious politicians as the party might still harbour are cringing against the wall, allowing an opportunistic charlatan to carry all before him. But it's a reflection of something else about Labour politics that Ken Livingstone, universally regarded as the nominee most likely to be favoured in a free vote among London party members, is being prepared for forcible exclusion. No embarrassment, it is felt in the New Labour hierarchy, that may be involved in keeping Livingstone out of the primary election could surpass the red-cheeked pain of watching him parade around for four years, on the back of substantially more votes than Tony Blair has ever had to his name.

THE authoritarian, in other words, lives. The party choice must not make the party list. His very popularity, indeed, is a count against him, as is the very particular charisma he would bring to the task of wakening London up, bargaining for the city against the Government and the boroughs, and all the other useful things Mr Blair has proposed for London, which he has assured us this mayor will be. A blow-dried placeman or woman, with teeth that smile but do not masticate, inoffensive and forgettable enough to make Lord Archer's hragarty seem possibly seductive, is being sought instead. So local democracy, it appears, is not yet required to revive too vigorously. The local Labour machines may be old and corrupt, but the

central machine is New and cannot be impeded. The party, while wanting to galvanise local politics, wishes to retain absolute control over the parameters of local choice. Nothing more need be said than to remind oneself that Mr Blair's favourite candidate to be mayor of London was originally Richard Branson, a charismatic businessman who has difficulty stringing a political sentence together without gazing vacantly into the middle distance in search of coherence.

Decentralising, therefore, is a fragile growth. On the other hand, the competitive abrasions of power are being put in place. The Government is making rods under which its own back will one day be in danger of bending. The mayor of London, unless a perfect nonentity, will at least become a pain, an alternative focus, a voice of outrage at how little is being done for transport or air quality or inward investment, a point of challenge to the smoothness of executive command. Still more will Scotland become — is already becoming, before the statutory ink is dry — a *demandeur* with whom Westminster has no choice but to negotiate.

The control-freakery in Blairism is hanging on. But there is a genuine reformer alongside, who has voluntarily unleashed forces he cannot expect always to master. How these will work their way through the fustian system of British government is impossible to foretell. They're as unpredictable as the Euro-sterling currency, another nightmare that upsets the established order: detested, therefore, by conservatives, but welcomed by all who are as alert to renewal as they are to risk.

The UK at the weekend did not resolve the lethal disagreement at the heart of EMU

This euro madness

John Redwood

BRITAIN is right to be cautious about the euro. The countries and currencies of Western Europe are not ready to join together as one. The politicians have moved far ahead of public opinion, and far ahead of economic reality. The more currencies and economies that are allowed in, the greater the risk of failure.

Britain failed badly at the weekend summit. When the EU states signed the Maastricht Treaty, they all agreed minimum requirements before a currency could join. No one then criticised the treaty for being too tough over entry terms. Some of us were worried that the terms were still too lax. All agreed that economies have to converge first before entering a single currency. The British Govern-

ment still claims to believe this: indeed it has set additional requirements over-riding the real economy to supplement the Maastricht financial requirements. Yet the UK at the conference did not insist that countries should meet all the Maastricht requirements before entry. Let alone other requirements as well. Nothing has changed between Maastricht and today to imply there is less need for rigour. The collapse of the Asian fixed exchange rate system shows how markets can destroy politically inspired arrangements built on sand.

The UK did not resolve the lethal disagreement at the heart of EMU. Germany wants an independent central bank which pursues a strong anti-inflation policy whatever the cost to jobs. France wants a central bank which is part of a political decision-making process, capable of considering objectives other than inflation. It would be better to sort this out before embarking on the project.

The desultory row this weekend showed that not even the politicians who want this scheme have stayed true to the ideas of no political interference, money on switching currencies. It is part of a project to set up a United States of Europe. There are plans for common taxation. Is this the inevitable next step, once the currency has been introduced? What say will people have in this crucial matter?

A single currency area needs big transfers of cash from the richer to the poorer areas. In the UK sterling currency union we accept the need for this, and route large sums by regional and local authority grants, and through social security with common national rates. What action will the new currency union of Western Europe be taking to do something similar for Euroland? How much will it eventually cost, and how big a tax increase will it mean?

Britain should point out that a single currency area needs a flexible labour market before you begin. There is not one interest rate which fits all. Some areas will be overheating — like Ireland — while others will still have high unemployment — like eastern Germany. Europe needs to do much more to allow people to move from place to place to find work before looking at the economies together.

Britain is right to stay out. One less country going in does reduce the risks. We could help our partners if we could persuade some of them that they are in too great a hurry. They should create a common labour market first. They should bring their economic performance more into line first. They should decide what the bank is going to do and how powerful it will be first. And they should set out what it means for taxes and transfers.

Mr Blair has also failed to see a crucial threat to Britain in the agreement. By accepting that the 11 will join up at European exchange-rate mechanism mid-rates, rather than market rates, he has left Britain facing a choice of entry at 2.95DM, our ERM mid-rate, or nothing. He should have insisted on market rates, so that if the pound does fall at some point in the future, that could be automatically reflected in our possible entry rate.

John Redwood is Conservative MP for Wokingham

Rich get richer

Paul Foot



THE chap at Merrill Lynch International was delighted when I showed some interest in his bank's latest publication, *World Wealth Report*. He was puzzled by the report's rather grudging reviews in top peoples' papers. Perhaps I can help. *World Wealth Report* has a shot at digging out statistics about HNWI's. Sorry, HNWI's! The report translates at once "high-net-worth individuals". A note at the bottom of the page translates again: "Individuals with net worth of at least a million dollars". The reason why *World Wealth Report* got a rather snide press, I suspect, is that rich people detest publicity. They don't object to statistics about mere mortals' average wages or benefits. But they don't like too many facts about their own wealth to circulate, and when you read *World Wealth Report* you can see why.

There are about eight million HNWI's in the world, a tenth of one per cent of the world's population. They hold, says the report, 17 trillion dollars. How much is that? Well, the annual gross national product of Britain is just over one trillion dollars. So is the combined GNP of the two billion people who live in India and China. So if all the people of Britain (or of India and China together) work solidly for 17 years they will just about manage to produce the same wealth as is now sitting in the (mainly Swiss and offshore) bank accounts of the current millionaires.

The report reveals in the phenomenal growth of the wealth of the mega-rich. In 1996, it discloses, millionaires' assets grew by 10 per cent, beating even the eight per cent growth of previous years. There are many reasons for this bonanza, says the report, but the main one is obvious: "the decisive victory of capitalism".

THE point of the report is to warn fellow investment bankers and speculators about the "private banking preferences" of the new plutocracy, so there are no references to other features of the decisive victory of capitalism, such as the humdrum of millions of people, mainly children, who are dying because they cannot get enough to eat or proper water to drink; or the sustained attack on trade unions throughout the so-called "developed" world which still houses 50 per cent of HNWI. No effort is made to compare the rate of growth of the mega-rich with the overall economic rate of growth, or the

The main reason for the bonanza is 'the decisive victory of capitalism'

the fortunes being piled up by scavengers and parasites in Geneva and the Cayman Islands.

How long in such circumstances can the "relative geo-political and social stability of the 1990s" last? To that awkward question, neither Merrill Lynch International nor their co-authors Gemini Consulting nor anyone else for that matter has any answer. All their high-paid resources could not predict the crisis in Indonesia or the enormous strike which has suddenly paralysed Denmark, a rich little democratic country normally regarded as the ultimate in geo-political and social stability.

I greatly enjoyed Jonathan Steele's recent *Guardian* article on the revolutions of 1988, especially his conclusion: "The states which retreat into authoritarianism or allow inequalities to become grotesque provoke their own collapse." The sooner the better.



For many on the continent, EMU is to lead to a United States of Europe

with their botched compromise over who should head the bank, immediately breaking the treaty rule of a single 8-year appointment for the governor.

For many on the continent EMU is not just some technical matter to save

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Birth pangs of the euro

Chirac's deal is tacky

IT IS difficult to imagine Europe's new currency getting off to a worse start after the shoddy compromise hammered out in Brussels. This will give France the presidency of the new European Central Bank (ECB) from the Dutch halfway through the eight-year first term. The euro was supposed to take politics out of monetary policy yet its launch has been marred by political fixing of the crudest kind. If this is what a European Central Bank freed from political interference is, then goodness knows what an interventionist model would look like. No one comes out of it well, least of all Jacques Chirac, President of France who, like a bullyboy in the playground, picked up the ball and refused to play on until everyone agreed to his terms. The only reason for insisting on a French candidate that he can produce is that "one has to defend one's own interests". If this principle were applied as ruthlessly by any of the other 10 members of monetary union it would consign the whole project to perpetual stalemate.

Everything was fine until Mr Chirac decided to oppose the appointment of the respected Dutchman Wim Duisenberg as the first president of the European Central Bank — the body that will eventually decide interest rates and print the single currency. There is no economic reason for preferring Mr Chirac's candidate (Jean-Claude Trichet, president of the Bank of France) over the Dutchman because they are both strong believers in sound money.

Nor is there a sound euro-political reason because the eventual appointment of a Frenchman won't of itself alter the new central bank's independence from political control because that would require a change to the statutes.

Mr Chirac presumably hopes he will gain political mileage at home by appearing to "stand up" to the Germans after Paris had lost out to Frankfurt as the site of the ECB. But the manner in which he announced that Mr Duisenberg had "freely" decided to step down after only half of his legally binding eight-year term was greeted with laughter even by normally sympathetic French journalists. Under the Maastricht Treaty the head of the central bank is supposed to serve for eight years. By insisting on Mr Duisenberg leaving "freely" after only four years, Mr Chirac made a travesty of the spirit of Maastricht and maybe its letter as well. For the French candidate then to assume office for a full eight-year stretch is adding insult to injury. No one in a democracy should be guaranteed a job for four years, irrespective of how well they do between now and then. The presidency of the ECB is locked up for the next 12 years thereby depriving other countries that may be members soon — maybe including Britain — from applying as well.

The City was expecting investors to sell euro-currencies yesterday and move into the pound or the dollar on the grounds that political interference in ECB's affairs was bound to make Europe's new currency weaker than the Deutschmark on which it has been modelled. But these fears were offset by the prospect that German interest rates may rise to prove that the concept of sound money isn't being swept aside. Either way it is far too early to judge what effect last weekend's decisions will have on the euro and its competitors. Its more

immediate consequences may be political — making it more difficult for Helmut Kohl to win his uphill struggle to be re-elected in September so he can be present at the birth of the euro over which he can claim joint paternity with the French. It will also make it more difficult for Wim Kok's Dutch government to stay in power after this week's elections.

Sadly, none of the French actions were aimed at the central problems of the ECB: like giving it a remit compelling it to take account of unemployment as well as inflation, and making it politically accountable to European electors. The fact that ECB tenure has been fixed for the next 12 years only underlines the scale of the problem.

Abacha must go

Nigeria's plight demands action

POSTERS at street corners in Lagos and other Nigerian cities proclaim that "Abacha is the Answer". But General Sani Abacha, whose five years in power have set a new standard for oppression and corruption in Africa, is the problem, not the solution, and he is a problem that the world must surely now confront. In the last two weeks the Abacha regime has lost the last shreds of legitimacy. The promised transition to civilian rule this autumn was revealed as even more of a farce when the five permitted political parties all nominated Abacha as their candidate. He is now the only "legal" candidate. He may in fact try to avoid an actual vote, preferring continuation in power by alleged acclamation to a poll, which, like the recent elections for the national assembly, might well be ignored by a majority of Nigerians. Meanwhile a military court has brought in

harsh verdicts against officers and civilians accused of plotting a coup, including six death sentences. There may have been such an attempt, but who can accept the verdicts of courts as compromised as those of this regime? In any case a government which itself seized power in outrageous circumstances can have no moral basis for the detention or execution of others trying to do the same thing for far better reasons. That was underlined by the recent report of the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Nigeria, with its dismal catalogue of violations, including widespread legal abuses, deaths in detention, and juvenile executions.

Whatever arguments there were for giving the Abacha regime time to put its house in order have now collapsed. The United States has in its hands the single most effective lever against him, since it takes 45 per cent of Nigeria's oil and a boycott would deeply undermine the regime. The Commonwealth, as an organisation uniquely linking Western, Muslim, African, and Asian countries, can exert another kind of pressure. At the Edinburgh summit, the heads of government put off action until the nature of Abacha's plans for a return to civilian rule became clearer. It is obvious now that the next meeting of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group should be brought forward to urgently consider a range of sanctions, including Nigeria's expulsion from the Commonwealth. But that may lead nowhere, since the group operates by "consensus" and there are still members, like Ghana and Malaysia, who could block decisions. Apart from that difficulty, the situation in Nigeria is so dire and the Commonwealth will be so discredited if it continues to prevaricate, that there is a strong case for an extraordinary Commonwealth summit. That could lead to the

convening of a Contact Group on Nigeria bringing in the United States and the European Union as well as the major Commonwealth countries like South Africa, Britain, and Canada. Nigeria's plight calls for concerted and effective international action.

A Done deal

Forget losses, think of the PR

FOR MANY Mancunians there was neither risk nor uncertainty eight weeks ago. Probability theory pointed to the natural order of life: Manchester United would once again win the Premiership. Even the local bookie, Fred Done, was convinced. He was so sure that eight weeks before the final game was due, he paid out £50,000 to punters who had bet on United. And letting his heart rule his head, he was also ready to offer 8-1 odds on Arsenal when other bookies were only giving 6-1. That cost him another £200,000 on Sunday when Arsenal secured the title. He could face a further £50,000 bill if Arsenal complete the double with a victory in the FA Cup.

To his credit there has been no whingeing from Mr Done. He was as chirpy as the proverbial chicken yesterday, openly admitting his errors, refusing to blame anyone but himself, and philosophically conceding he would have to take "a bit more water with my whisky" this month. Will ministers please follow suit. Mr Done, who runs 115 betting shops, sounds as though he can carry such losses. But it is good to hear a bookmaker being a good loser. He demonstrated there is something worse than leaving a match early and missing a last minute winner. What he has lost to punters, he can reclaim in good PR.

Letters to the Editor

Shell funding shock (or not)

AS DIRECTOR of the Centre for Philosophical Studies at King's College, London, may I respond to Peter Singer's letter (April 29) in which he announced he had refused an invitation to speak here because of Shell's involvement with us?

This Centre is entirely independent of the Department of Philosophy at King's. The department is not funded by any outside sources. The Centre, whose role is to make philosophy and philosophical topics available to a wider audience of academics and the general public, was pleased to accept financial support from Shell UK.

The Centre's activities and indeed its existence would not be possible without outside financial support, which has enabled it to run many well-received events, including conferences on philosophy for children and on philosophy and psychoanalysis.

The Centre recognises Shell's support on its publicity material, but retains its complete independence from Shell over its activities and the control of its programme: a recent conference on the philosophy of the environment, for example, explored many aspects of this contentious subject in an intellectually rigorous way. Speakers included such acknowledged experts as Sir Crispin Tickell, Professor Stephen Clark, Mary Midgley and Bryn Jones, a former

director of Greenpeace. The Centre's connection with Shell has enabled us to have a continuing dialogue with the company. All our dealings with Shell have led us to believe that the company wishes to open up the debate about environmental and ethical issues.

I recognise the potential dangers inherent in British universities' increasing dependence on private sector financing, but I can assure Professor Singer and your readers that Shell has been meticulous in respecting the academic freedom of the Centre for Philosophical Studies.

J R Milton, King's College, London.

THREE cheers for Peter Singer! It was surely to read his defiant words at a time when the integrity of academia is being dissolved by the frantic urge to secure funding from often ethically dubious sources.

Those of us in universities whose professionalism now strays from little more than hired back status should feel uncomfortable with Professor Singer's actions. Let us stop kowtowing to our corporate sponsors. We need more Peter Singers to salvage freedom of thought in universities today. Dr Andy Merrifield, Department of Geography, Kings College, London.

PETER SINGER asserted that there is a real danger that the nature of outside funding for universities could have an influence, consciously or not, on the activities of philosophers.

But would such influence necessarily be a bad thing? If Shell UK believes that they can improve their profitability with help from philosophers, why shouldn't they accept this help?

And if there are two points of view on the contribution of Shell funds of energy to the Nigerian economy, to human rights or global warming, isn't it the philosophers to whom we should look to set out the arguments on each side, aided of course by engineers, economists and ecologists?

If, by selective quoting of research results or by use of rhetorical rather than logical argument, philosophers are seduced into justifying immoral behaviour by multinational corporations, other philosophers will hopefully publish arguments in rebuttal. Such is the nature of applied academic research: if Shell is willing to subsidise such arguments, so much the better.

I should perhaps add that I have had no connection with Shell for nearly 30 years, at which time I led a seminar on cost benefit analysis. The only pressure on me that I can recall was intended

to make a complex subject more intelligible. Tony Flower, Kent.

AT LEAST the truth of universities, open and above board. There was that England's only universities, Oxford and Cambridge, were paid by the establishment to turn out compliant clerks, clerics and "thinkers".

By the mid-20th century, such institutions, funded by their extensive land-ownings, were joined by the rest. Again, turning out trained hands for industry, finance, government and the professions, all covertly funded from the "social budget" of taxpayers' money; providing highly trained graduates for employers. Ready to use, at no cost to the bottom line.

At least, now, the funding is direct: pharmaceutical companies paying for "institutes"; business schools paid for by big business. Shell paying to get a result from philosophers and so on.

Don't believe me? Just where are the universities calling for nationalisation of land? The abolition of usury? Citizen's income for all? An end to the arms trade? The conversion of multinationals into workers' co-ops? Well, where? John Courtneidge, Hertford.



Holidays you can't bank on

THE Co-operative Bank objects to the name "bank holiday" for public holidays, but does not, like your Leader yesterday, go far enough. The present holidays are badly distributed and encourage large numbers of people to visit popular resorts at the same time. Hospital A & E departments also have to cope with increased casualties from disastrous DIY sessions.

The obvious solution is to abolish the fixed bank holidays and replace them with 12 statutory single days per year which each employee can take as agreed with the employer. This will help to spread the load on roads, resorts and the NHS, and make it easier for people of different cultures to observe their holy days.

Barry Thorpe, Cheshire, Cheshire.

IF WE are going to stop calling them bank holidays on the grounds that they no longer involve the suspension of banking, we might as well stop calling them holidays on the grounds that they are no longer holy. Conversely, if we are going to retain the word holiday on the grounds that no one gives a second thought to the derivation of the word, we might as well go on calling them bank holidays. What all this proves is that suggestions for changing everyday words invariably come from people who are fundamentally illiterate, such as bankers. David Farlett, London.

HOW about a Virgin holiday? Sue Thomas, Ipswich.

Stop blaming everyone else: it was Blair who blew it in Brussels

OUT of complacency comes incompetence. Certainly this seems to be the narrative which is emerging from the lazy approach of the Government to negotiations in Europe (Euro faces threat to credibility, May 4).

At Amsterdam, important powers such as majority voting in foreign policy and wide-ranging jurisdiction for the European Court of Justice in the field of criminal policy were thoughtlessly conceded. Little was said of this. Instead, being "on message" included trumpeting a ridiculous cycle race and an opt-out "safeguarding" British frontier controls, noteworthy only for its meaningless outside the world of tabloid headlines, given the existence of the Anglo-Irish common travel area.

At Brussels over the weekend, one would have thought it the duty of the British presidency, amply forewarned, to come up with an agreement in due time which was clearly

both legal and credible on the global capital markets. Instead, being "on message" meant blaming our Government's failure on the French and Germans. Odd, really, as I understood one of the main protagonists to be Dutch. Pauline Chalmers, Lecturer in EU Law, London School of Economics.

THE only good way to resolve the controversy surrounding the European Central Bank presidency is to recruit a non-European neutral to the post. An American with experience at the Fed would be ideal, as it would help to regain some of the credibility lost in the process of this messy decision. Robin de la Motte, St Catherine's College, Cambridge.

We do not publish letters where only an e-mail address is supplied; please include a full postal address. We may edit letters.

Second opinion

JAMES Heartfield presents a very erudite history of the term Third Way but it contains one error (Letters, May 4). Patrick Harrington, who has made no secret of his youthful involvement with the National Front, does indeed edit a magazine called Third Way, but his bias is certainly not to the extreme right. On the contrary, it promotes a libertarian, co-operative brand of socialism — that of William Morris, Edward Carpenter, rural living and the protection of local cultures. Dr Aidan Rankin, London.

JAMES Heartfield was wrong in saying that the Chartist magazine is defunct. We are alive and kicking and still pushing a Third Way, somewhat different from Tony Blair's, however. We support a radical mixture of parliamentary action and support for autonomous groups and campaigns as set out in our pamphlet, *New Maps for the Nineties: A Third Road Social Reader*, published in 1992. Peter Chalk, Chartist, London.

MY own favourite number planes (Letters, May 2): I once saw FENIX parked nose to tail with a JAG and a dazzling red Mercedes convertible with two very wild looking young guys bearing AK47. Maurice Geller, London.

Golfers on course to watch the birdie

I CAN understand the concerns about the ecological impact of a proposed golf course in ancient woodland (Report, May 2). However, in participating in the first Bird-watching Open, an awareness-raising initiative which should also demonstrate how much golf courses can contribute to conservation.

David Stubbs, Executive director, European Golf Association Ecology Unit, Dorking, Surrey.

THREE years ago I helped to identify areas of botanical and ornithological importance on a 65-acre site earmarked by a local golf club for an extension. The survey identified a valley mire, supporting rare plant communities, and considerable numbers of breeding lapwings, snipe, curlews, skylarks, and other once common but now endangered birds. A management agreement was made to safeguard as much of this endangered snipe and bird life as possible. Less than a fortnight ago, at the height of the bird-breeding season, the golf course steamrollered the tacit management agreement by bringing in trench diggers. At least one snipe nest was flattened, all breeding birds have left, the valley mire is being drained. Peter Buchanan, Garrigill, Cumbria.

trast, can offer relative sanctuary for flora and fauna.

On May 17, over 100 club members took part in the first Bird-watching Open, an awareness-raising initiative which should also demonstrate how much golf courses can contribute to conservation.

David Stubbs, Executive director, European Golf Association Ecology Unit, Dorking, Surrey.

THREE years ago I helped to identify areas of botanical and ornithological importance on a 65-acre site earmarked by a local golf club for an extension. The survey identified a valley mire, supporting rare plant communities, and considerable numbers of breeding lapwings, snipe, curlews, skylarks, and other once common but now endangered birds. A management agreement was made to safeguard as much of this endangered snipe and bird life as possible. Less than a fortnight ago, at the height of the bird-breeding season, the golf course steamrollered the tacit management agreement by bringing in trench diggers. At least one snipe nest was flattened, all breeding birds have left, the valley mire is being drained. Peter Buchanan, Garrigill, Cumbria.

THE situation, but find that, if anything, the opposite is true. The windfall tax on water companies has had the result of taking revenue raised locally from an already economically deprived area and distributing it elsewhere, even though the capital is urgently needed for environmental improvements in the region.

The Government has refused to prioritise a coastal clean-up by supporting a tighter bathing water directive from the EU, even though it is in a position to do so during its presidency of the EU. The recommendations of an all-party select committee, which included a call for full treatment of all sewage discharges by 2002, has been

greeted with total silence. It was therefore no great surprise to read in the same issue that 69 per cent of Labour's MPs prefer holidaying in the Mediterranean. Charles Hopkins, Surfers Against Sewage, Redruth, Cornwall.

ON the subject of Cornwall's lack of communication with and distance from anywhere, you neglected to mention the once vital link between Newquay and Plymouth to Heathrow and the rest of the world, via British Airways. It was a business link, and it was always hard to get a seat. People over in England then decided to re-direct our only really efficient link with

commerce to Gatwick. Now the plane is only half full with people connecting to package holiday charter flights at Gatwick.

Your article only scratched the surface of the miserable bungling of Cornwall's economy, not least by the carpet-bagging MPs we end up with down here, my own being an honourable exception. This is God's own country, but we could do with some help. Isobel Barker, Torpoint, Cornwall.

YOUR statement that Cornwall has no university gave a misleading impression. The Open University supports over 1,300 students in Cornwall on undergraduate and

reports such as that into the Watford crash will not be worth the paper they are written on. John McCarthy, (Watford passenger), Apsley, Herts.

YOU rightly bring attention to the vast gap between how ministers would like us all to travel and what they do themselves (Off the rails, April 27). When will the Government realise that motorists are not going to "get out of the car" and subject themselves to a public transport system that is neither safe, reliable, economical nor efficient? Christopher MacGowan, London.

When safety goes off the rails

RAILTRACK's claim to be committed to improving safety (Railtrack dangers exposed, May 1) appears to stop short of actually spending any money. Twenty months on from the Watford rail crash the company has still to produce its internal report into the crash, despite saying first that it would report "within weeks rather than months", then arguing that to publish before criminal proceedings against the driver might prejudice those proceedings. Well, the trial is over and the driver has been acquitted. Until the Health and Safety Executive is given powers to compel rail companies to implement recommendations,

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Gojko Susak

In the cause of Croatia

GOJKO Susak, the headline Croatian defence minister and a central figure in the 1990s wars of Yugoslavia's disintegration, has died aged 53 of lung cancer, leaving behind an army he built virtually from scratch and an anxious nationalist constituency in both Croatia and his native Bosnia.

Born in the Croatian nationalist bastion of Siroki Brijeg in western Herzegovina, Susak was the second most powerful man, after President Franjo Tudjman, in the independent republic of Croatia that emerged after the collapse of Yugoslavia in 1991. Within a few months of the new state's birth, he was appointed defence minister and held that post to the end, making him the longest serving cabinet member in Zagreb. He played a key part in the national defence council and was also deputy leader of Tudjman's ruling Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ). "In 1991 there was no army," he

observed last year. "When the army was established, I led it, although I had no military experience of any kind."

In a ruling party eternally split tactically and ideologically between hawks and doves, Susak was the leading and most influential nationalist hardliner, utterly committed to routing the Serbs, banishing them from Croatia, and carving up Bosnia-Herzegovina to annex tracts of territory into a greater Croatia.

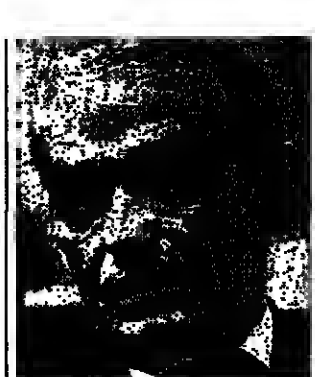
Despite a wretched start when the Serbs seized a quarter of Croatia in the 1991 war, Susak spent four years patiently cultivating the American, building his armed forces, and supporting Croatian extremists in Bosnia, before triumphing in 1995. The Serbs were expelled, most Croatian territory reclaimed, and *de facto* control consolidated over large parts of Bosnia — a key part in the time of writing, the overall victors of the 1991-95 wars.

Chain-smoking and tough-minded, Susak kept a low profile in the media and quietly

set about his aims with a ruthless efficiency and steady determination. Fired by a burning hatred of communism and contempt for the Serbs, whom he was convinced had repressed the Croats for decades, he resolved to fire one of the first shots of the Yugoslav wars.

According to Jadranka Reichl-Kir, widow of the assassinated liberal Osijek police chief, Josip Reichl-Kir, Susak and a couple of henchmen headed east from Zagreb in April 1991 to the meandering Croat-Serb frontline on the Danube in eastern Slavonia.

There Susak took a shoulder-held, anti-aircraft weapon and fired it across into the Serb nationalist stronghold of Borovo Selo. Such nationalist passion was engendered by Susak's native region of Bosnia-Herzegovina and burnished during two decades of exile in Siroki Brijeg, in western Herzegovina, a rural, rocky area of the Dalmatian hinterland and a Croatian Catholic fastness.



Susak... ruthless efficiency

The site of an ancient Catholic monastery, Siroki Brijeg, became notorious during the second world war as the seat of the Croatian fascist Ustasha. Many members of Susak's extended family are believed to have been killed fighting for the Ustasha. Tito's communist partisans, after winning the war, closed down the monastery and renamed the town Liscica. One of Susak's first acts in government in 1991 was to

restore the name of Siroki Brijeg.

As a youth, Susak moved to Zagreb to study maths and physics at a period, in the late 1960s, when the Croatian capital was in the grip of the liberalising cultural and political movement known as the Croatian Spring. The incipient rebellion was quashed harshly by Tito. In disgust, Susak emigrated to Canada, where he studied management and communications and became active in the nationalist diaspora, agitating against communist Yugoslavia. He later opened a pizza parlour and became relatively wealthy.

Tudjman, who also fell foul of Tito's crackdown in the late 1960s and was jailed by the regime (although he had been a partisan and communist general in Tito's army), met Susak in Toronto in 1987.

When, three years later, Tudjman came home in the first post-communist free elections, Susak played a key role, acting as the fledgling party's chief foreign fundraiser, pour-

ing millions of dollars into Tudjman's war chest. His reward was to become Tudjman's most trusted accomplice and defence minister.

Susak spoke fondly of "well-respected Croats" who were officials in the 1941-45 fascist state. At a medieval jousting festival in Sinj, south of Zagreb, he showed up and gave the stiff-arm salute. In 1993, he went to the mainly Muslim town of Travnik, in central Bosnia, to raise the Croatian flag and claim the town for Zagreb. Such moves helped to spark the 1993 Muslim-Croat war, which he later, under strong US pressure, called off.

Susak was the key Croatian hard man of the past decade, highly successful in his own controversial terms for a man with no previous military, governmental or party political experience.

He leaves a wife and three children.

Ian Traynor

Gojko Susak, nationalist, born April 18, 1945; died May 4, 1998

Bill Reid

Carving out old Canada

BILL Reid, who has died aged 78, was Canada's leading artist. His carvings rivalled the finest produced by his Haida forebears of the indigenous communities of the Canadian north-west, which had once been centres of a fine artistic tradition.

His grandmother had come from Tanu, a now vanished village wiped out by disease in the 19th century but once the crowning gem of West Coast art, while his mother, who had married a man of German Scots stock, was from Skidegate, also on the Queen Charlotte Islands. She was strong-willed, westernised and Anglicised, and consciously passed nothing of her heritage to her three children: Bob became a prominent graphic designer, Peggy rose high in medicine, while Bill turned to radio announcing.

He had superb diction, and his voice became known across Canada during an 18-year career with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. He also put north-west coast art back on track, firstly as part of a team that rescued totem poles from abandoned villages, and secondly as a practitioner of Haida carving.

Bill came to art by chance when he discovered some work by Charles Edensaw, one of his Haida ancestors. He inherited the tools of a Charles Gladstone, another ancestor. Once Bill mastered Haida iconography, he never broke its rules, no matter how innovative his work. He found freedom in tradition.

In 1958, he was commissioned to erect totem poles and two traditional Haida houses on the University of British Columbia campus. In Skidegate, in his mother's memory, he raised a pole of unequalled beauty. He was also the first living artist to have his work displayed in the Musée de l'Homme in Paris, with the works of Claude Lévi-Strauss, who wrote of Bill, "an incomparable artist (who) tended and revived a flame that was close to dying."

His last great work is a

bronze canoe, 18 feet high, crowded with Haida mythic creatures. Wolf holds raven's wing in its teeth; beaver paddles; bear ignores; and mouse, a newcomer, peeks out from below. In the centre sits a calm figure with a serene expression — it is Bill, wearing a conical hat, Chilcat robe, and chief's staff, piloting this wild assemblage into unknown waters. One version of this work is at the Canadian embassy in Washington, the other at Vancouver airport.

Privately, Bill spoke little. I recall a dinner when the best eels begged: "Bill, at least say 'Ugh'." Asked to comment on an exhibit of contemporary British Columbian art, he said: "Too many Indians."

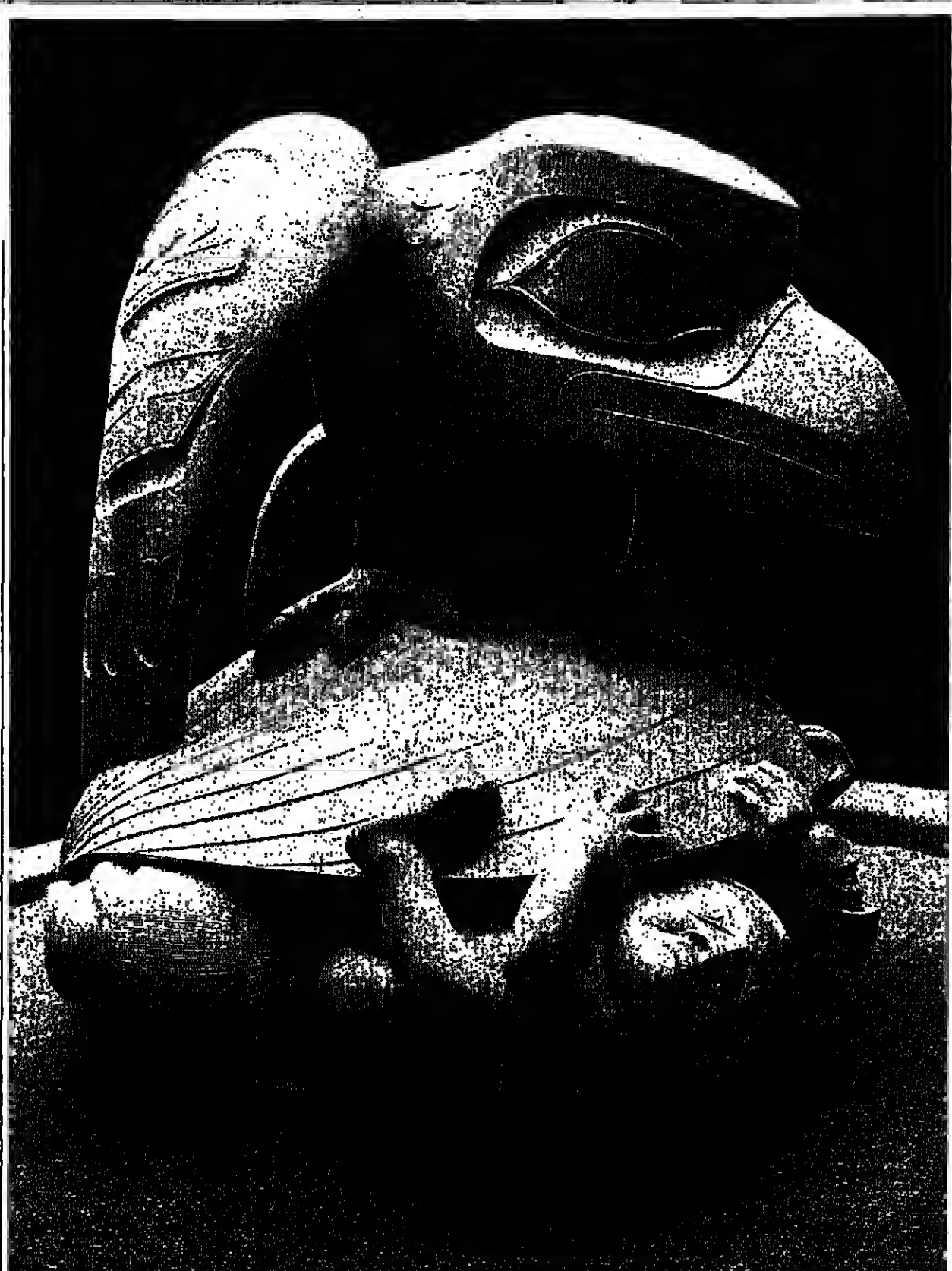
Reticence concealed gentleness and determination. Scores of people, like myself, thought of him as best friend. Women adored him. Nothing distracted him from his goals, not even Parkinson's disease, which he suffered for 25 years. The moment he picked up a tool, his hands steadied and magic began. In some strange way, the essence of Haida art, once the lifeblood of an entire people, grew within him with an intensity deriving from primary sources and leading to daring innovations.

FOR example, his carving of the raven, a clamshell showed flawless technique, courage and freedom. It was monumental, yet only a few inches high. Pure Haida, but like no other Haida carving, its intricacy, compressed power, tense relationship between man and raven, all expressed — in Bill's words — the precariousness of a society so highly structured, so highly developed. "All its parts had to fit together perfectly to function as it did," he said.

He is survived by his wife, Martine, and one daughter.

Edmund Carpenter

William Ronald Reid, carver, born February 12, 1920; died March 13, 1998



A people's art... Reid's carving of a raven discovering mankind in a clamshell — 'monumental, yet only a few inches high'

Jackdaw



Pagan paths

YOU can travel the world on the goddess tip. In the incense-filled temples of India, you can meet with Shakti and Kali, the Hindu goddesses of fertility and destruction. Together they represent the cycle of life, warring for union with Shiva, who dances out the creation of the universe. Across the oceans to the Americas, you can meet grandmother Earth and grandfather Sky uniting in sexual union through thunder and lightning to create our planet. And you can catch the goddess vibrate in Europe, from Greek gods and goddesses playing out their destinies to the path I have decided to tread myself, the pagan path where Mother Earth is honoured and celebrated, where the creation of the world is of utmost importance because essentially we

are all a part of the creation feedback loop.

Spirit gets closer to creation.

Miracle wine

FINDING the 5,000 was a pretty good trick, raising the dead was quite nifty, but we reckon turning water into wine was probably the greatest miracle of all. Imagine how popular you would be if you could perform such magic. No more trudging around Threshers for a cheap bottle of plonk, because every time you fancied a quick snifter all you'd need to do was turn on the tap. Well, that power is now within your grasp. Simply pour water into the Norwegian-produced WineTime, add some concentrated flavoured yeast and let the machine's hyper-fast yeast do its stuff. Just 24 hours later, you'll be able to down up to four bottles of your own wine with sweetness and dryness and alcoholic content adjusted to your own tastes. Keep a peeled eye out for WineTime's UK launch later this year, with an expected price of £150. *T3 gets punch-drunk on home brew.*

Farrah away

RED: Does it upset you that there's this perception of you being kooky?

Farrah Fawcett: I don't mind that. I like to be kooky, fun. But kooky is not good. The room I'm staying in here is La Luna...

Red: Like a lunatic?

FF: Well, that didn't occur to me. I thought of moonrise stupidly. I forgot my troubles for a moment. Forgive me. Well, I really don't know why the think I'm crazy. I think it's just that I'm not who they want me to be. But no can do, that's not my job.

Red: You must have a very different feeling about the media now than you once did.

FF: I do. Well, I always felt pursued unnaturally.

Red: The fact that you did a nude layout and video for Playboy in the wake of your split with Ryan really did set you up for a fall.

FF: Yeah, it wasn't the best time. But it's like what they say: God only gives you as much as you can handle. I must think I'm really strong.

Farrah Fawcett, interviewed in Red.

Jackdaw wants jewels. E-mail jackdaw@guardian.co.uk, fax 0171-713 4366; write Jackdaw, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER.

Hannah Pool

A Country Diary

SOMERSET: The greens of our landscape would once have been complemented by the reds and browns of traditional breeds of cattle like Herefords. Now it is the black and white of Holstein Friesians. These most efficient producers of milk in large quantities need 18 to 24 per cent protein in their diet. Grass contains about 10 per cent, enough for traditional and "primitive" breeds but not for modern "improved" breeds. They need additives. On Nor-

wood Farm, at Norton St Philip, "primitive" animals — like the Soay or Shetland sheep — and "early improved" breeds — like the broad-backed Portland, produced by 18th century experiments in agricultural improvement — live comfortably off grass and clover. They are naturally hardy and resistant to disease. These 300 acres are really productive. There is a market for the meat, and the facility for people to see 15 breeds of sheep, nine of cattle

and five of pigs, as well as goats and ponies. And there is serious education. I learnt that the Portland probably came here with the Romans and that its Mediterranean biological clock inclines it to breed all the year round. It is the ancestor of the Dorset and of all breeds that have been improved to share this characteristic. The lanolin in the fleeces of the so-called Golden Hoof gives it a golden tinge, and this animal contributed to the wealth of the Cotswolds by endowing the grassland with rich organic fertilisation.

JOHN VALLINS

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

A REPORT headed, Galaxy computer model points to story of universe, page 9, April 14, under the byline of our science editor, was presented as an account given to the Edinburgh Science Festival by Professor John Peacock of the Royal Observatory, Edinburgh. In fact, our science editor did not attend the festival but spoke to Professor Peacock earlier on the telephone and intended his report to be a preview of some of the points he understood Professor Peacock intended to make. In the event, the main subject of our

printed report, a new large supercomputer simulation, was not mentioned at all in Professor Peacock's presentation. Furthermore, a quotation was attributed to Professor Peacock which gave the impression that he was claiming sole credit for the work on the supercomputer simulation. This has caused Professor Peacock severe embarrassment in his relationship with other members of the international Virgo consortium in the United Kingdom and North America, with his collabora-

tors at the Max-Planck-Institut für Astrophysik in Garching bei München, at whose computer centre, also in Garching, the work highlighted in our report was actually performed. We apologise for the inaccuracies of this report and particularly regret our failure to credit the work of the Max-Planck-Institut.

It is the policy of the Guardian to correct errors as soon as possible. Readers may contact the office of the Readers' Editor, Ian Moyes, by telephoning 0171 339 9589 between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Fax: 0171 339 9897. E-mail: reader@guardian.co.uk

Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava

Guinness isn't always good for you

THE longer she lived, the better the parties given by Maureen, Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava, became. She died, aged 91, having marked the start of her 10th decade with a ball at Claridge's, at which her oldest and poshest pal, the Queen Mother, took to the dance floor.

That tiara and white-tie do was effectively the swan-song of a family yacht in the Irish Guinness family, whose image, born in the gossip columns of the 1920s, changed little over the century: from being young, rich and beautiful, she became old, rich, beautiful and wrinkled. With Guinness blood, the world was always her oyster.

Maureen was the second of three daughters of Ernest Guinness, who managed to take them round the world in the family yacht and run the inherited brewing business with apparent effortless. When he died in 1949, he left more than £3 million and 13 houses in Ireland.

Before then, Maureen had acquired a taste for a life of her own (her grandfather was the first Earl of Iveagh). In 1930, she married brainy Basil Ava, who later became the fourth Marquess of Dufferin and Ava. She also acquired a taste for marriage, there were two subsequent unions after the marriage, a junior minister for the colonies, was killed in action in Burma in 1945.

Osbert Lancaster lighted on Maureen as the model for the rich but slightly unworried Maudie Littlehampton in his pocket cartoon in the Daily Express. Given that sort of semi-immortality, don't ask what Maureen Guinness did with her long life. Any girl with bobbed blonde hair and bonfire eyes in the 1920s — educated in England because of family fears that they might become Sinn Féin targets — was destined to be merely a bright young thing.

Finishing school in Switzerland, and her coming-out as a debutante, launched her on London society as a trophy for wealthy bachelors. She didn't ever need to do much — apart from keep the old social order going at Clarendon, the family home with its 3,000 acres in County Down, which she restored with family money.

Though the Guinness sisters couldn't rival that other head-turning trio of the early part of the century, the Milfords — in brains or wit, Maureen

at least could hold her own in mischief. Being a lynch-pin of the ascendancy didn't stop her puncturing the snobbery of her house guests; she occasionally "disgusted" herself as a rather slatternly maid and, explaining that her "mistress" was delayed upstairs, gleefully served them the wrong drinks and — asked — gave frequent directions to the various loos.

To her credit, as a young woman, Maureen swung her bejewelled evening bag to discourage an amorous, upwardly-mobile Oswald Mosley, thus proving that diamonds are a girl's best friend. To her credit, in old age, she refused an offer by Lord Longford (best man at the first of her weddings) to support her at an industrial tribunal, at which her butler claimed wrongful dismissal, with the words, "No thank you, I am in quite enough trouble already."

The frocks with the butler shows the sadder, crabbier side of a legendary hostess: she dismissed him for allegedly stealing some apples —



Maureen... Maudie model

crabs, as it happens — and the case went against her. A litigious streak dominated her later life, parts of recent years were consumed in fighting an action brought by her daughters and daughter-in-law, who sought to block Maureen's wish to make her grand-children beneficiaries of a family trust.

Increasing immobility and family feuds caused her to sigh on one occasion: "About the only problem the Guinnesses don't have is money."

John Cunningham

Maureen Guinness, Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava, born January 31, 1907; died May 3, 1998

Birthdays

Sir Michael Angus, chairman, Boots the Chemist, 68; Sue Atkins, chair, British Ladies' Boxing Association, 37; Graehame Clinton, cricketer, 45; Elizabeth Conran, museum curator, 56; Jean Corston, Labour MP, 56; Joanna Foster, director, BT Forum, 58; Michael Lind, say-hoggy, film director, 58; John Maxton, Labour MP,

62; Michael Palin, comedian, actor, 55; Lady Plowden, former chairman, IBA, 59; Barry Reed, chairman, Austin Reed Group, 67; Roger Rees, actor, 54; James Stevens, composer, 68; David Stewart, Labour MP, 42; Jonathan Weeks, managing director, Woolworths, 59; John Whitaker, cricketer, equestrian, 36; Brian White, Labour MP, 57; Prof Gannar Williams, historian, 78.

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The Guardian

Analysis Security agencies

Spooks in the dark

Robin Cook praises Britain's spies, but fresh revelations continue to embarrass him. And a new Whitehall review is unlikely to bring more openness and public accountability.
By Richard Norton-Taylor and Ian Black

ROBIN COOK faces fresh embarrassment after disclosure of a freelance attempt (allegedly involving British officials) to overthrow the government of Sierra Leone cast an unwelcome spotlight on Britain's intelligence agencies, envied throughout the world for their success in maintaining a veil of secrecy over their activities. Flaunting the Government's achievements during its first year in a Mansion House speech ten days ago, the Foreign Secretary praised the Secret Intelligence Service, known as MI6, and GCHQ, the eavesdropping centre for their success in tracking terrorist groups, "disrupting their operations and breaking their weapons supply chains". In revealing Iraq's attempts to stockpile chemical and biological weapons, and in tracking Iran's nuclear weapons programme.

Such public attention was unprecedented. Equally striking was Cook's list of their role in tackling what he called Labour's "fresh priorities" — the global fight against drugs, organised crime, and money-laundering.

So is this a case of New Labour Spooks? Some saw Cook's enthusiastic praise as a shot across the Treasury's bows. British taxpayers fork out about £1 billion a year on the intelligence agencies, significantly more than is spent on diplomacy.

Chief Secretary to the Treasury said last year that the root-and-branch comprehensive spending review across Whitehall — whose results should be known this summer — will cover MI6, GCHQ, and the Security Service, MI5.

Mr Cook's remarks were a far cry from those made by his predecessors, including Lord Howe, who told the Scott arms-to-Iraq inquiry that intelligence reports were "cornflakes in the wind". David Mellor, a former FO minister, called them "significantly less riveting than the novels would have you believe".

Too often, secrecy has distorted the agencies' view of the real world, encouraging tunnel vision and a closed political culture. The security

and intelligence agencies have been prey to their vested interests, victims of what critics call "cognitive dissonance" — they ignore what they don't want to hear.

It has also prevented them from seeing the wood from the trees, notably in the disastrous run-up to the Argentine invasion of the Falklands in 1982. As Lord Hurd, another of Cook's predecessors, told Scott: "There is nothing particularly truthful about a report simply because it is a secret one". Such poor ratings seem justified: MI5 failed to predict the end of the IRA ceasefire in 1996, MI6 failed to predict the fall of the Shah of Iran, Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait, and, most notably, the end of the cold war.

But now, we are told, times have changed. The agencies are more disciplined and, after a Whitehall initiative prompted by the Scott inquiry, more effective systems are in place to ensure that intelligence is passed to those who need it. A sub-committee on Security Service Priorities and Performance has been set up with senior officials from the Treasury, Home, Foreign and Northern Ireland offices, and the departments of Social Security and Trade and Industry. GCHQ has what its officials call a marketing director whose job is to ask what its Whitehall (and Washington) clients want.

Mr Cook is said to have been impressed by MI5 and GCHQ. In one of his own ethical/human rights priorities — catching war criminals to help to strengthen Bosnia's peace deal — they have played a key role. The Foreign Secretary's remarks endorse the attempt by the secret servants to find themselves new tasks after the end of the cold war.

Certainly there were new threats and new priorities: attempts by rogue regimes — notably Libya, Iran, and Iraq — to acquire nuclear, chemical and biological weapons; the growth of amorphous terrorist groups, of drug-traffickers, money-launderers, and international organised crime. GCHQ suggests that these, not British citizens, are the targets of Menwith Hill in North Yorkshire, the world's largest eavesdropping centre, controlled by

the US National Security Agency GCHQ's senior partner. But should there continue to be three separate agencies chasing the same targets? David Bickford, former legal adviser to MI5 and MI6, says there is no justification now for this "triplication of management, bureaucracy and turf battles". He points to the growth of private security and intelligence companies — Defence Services Ltd and Sundline are examples — as evidence that Government agencies are not doing their job properly.

The agencies argue that although they may have similar targets they have different functions. GCHQ eavesdrops on communications, MI5 recruits agents (including British businessmen) to spy abroad, MI6 is responsible for countering espionage, Irish-based and international terrorism, and subversion, in Britain.

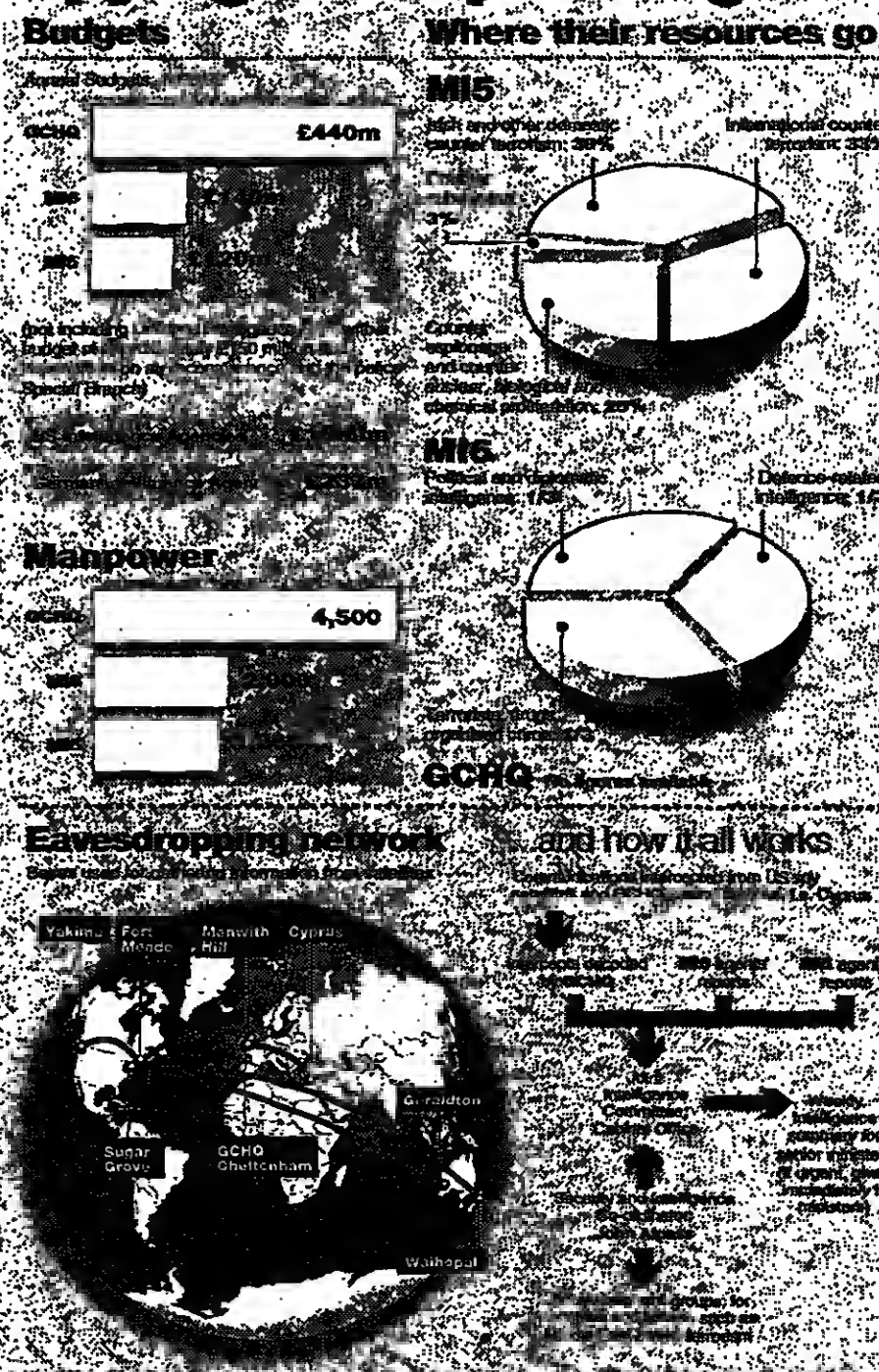
FACED with the prospect of time on its hands after the collapse of communism and the prospect of peace in Northern Ireland, MI5 persuaded the previous Tory government that its role should be expanded to include helping the police and Customs to combat "serious crime", defined extremely broadly in the 1996 Security Service Act.

While expanding into new areas, MI5 insists it must retain its old ones. It says the growth of right-wing groups in the EU — where MI5 has an increasing, little-noticed, role — justifies the agency holding on to its statutory authority to monitor political targets, even though it acknowledges that subversion no longer poses a serious threat in Britain.

The collapse of the Soviet Union has meant that western allies are diverting more resources to spying on each other. MI6, for example, has agents in European Union countries, and GCHQ picks up economic and commercial intelligence on Britain's competitors. This does not, however, interfere with the close ties between intelligence communities here and in the US. The secret 1947 UKUSA treaty ties GCHQ with the NSA — its US equivalent — and with eaves-



Spying and spending



Similar targets, different functions: MI6 (top) and MI5 (above left) in London, and GCHQ in Cheltenham.

Co-operation between national security agencies in the EU on law and order issues, including asylum, immigration, and political demonstrations, is growing fast, with no democratic scrutiny. There is no effective scrutiny of the aggressive operations of MI6 — whose agents are by law immune from prosecution if they commit acts abroad which would be illegal here. There is no proper control of the use of informants — secret files show that a covert unit of military intelligence — the Force Research Unit — colluded with loyalist death squads in Northern Ireland (6).

dropping agencies in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand in an Anglo-Saxon alliance which spans the world. Though the statutory activities of Britain's spy agencies is limited to protecting our own national security and "economic well-being", the US has a direct claim on GCHQ's resources.

This is made clear in a classified GCHQ manual which tells staff that the agency's relationship with the US must be "of sufficient scale and of the right kind to make a continuation of the Sigint [signals intelligence] alliance to our partners". It adds: "This may entail on occasion the applying of US resources to the meeting of US requirements".

Britain's spy agencies say they will be never be short of targets. Yet determined and disciplined organisations — the IRA, for example — have shown how difficult it is for state agencies to win against them. MI5 has acknowledged for years that there was no security solution to the Northern Ireland question.

Meanwhile, sophisticated methods of encryption available to increasingly resourceful crime syndicates will make it difficult, perhaps impossible, for the agencies to intercept coded electronic communications. Mafia-type groups are among the biggest customers of the US Federal Reserve and the German Bundesbank and the underground economy is estimated to hold up to 75 per cent of cash in circulation (5).

The dangers to democracy in providing the agencies with more and more technological and financial resources are obvious. Britain lags far behind other countries, including the US, in oversight arrangements. A parliamentary Security and Intelligence Committee — chaired by Lord (Tom) King, the former Tory minister — meets in private, and its annual reports are censored almost to the point of incomprehensibility by Whitehall before they are published. It has refused to call David

Shayler, the MI5 renegade who described the agency last year as "badly managed, inefficient, and bureaucratic".

THE authors of a study of the unaccountable power of spy agencies described Whitehall's "air of complacent superiority" and even "anti-democratic leanings" (7). The agencies might be moving into new territory, but neither they, nor the new Labour Government, have satisfactorily answered the age-old question: Who should guard the spies?

The review of the agencies, conducted by John Alpass, Whitehall's Security and Intelligence Coordinator and a former head of personnel at MI5, is unlikely to answer the question, or to recommend any serious reforms or budget cuts.

Sources: (1) Speech by Robin Cook, April 23; (2) Intelligence Power in Peace and War, by Michael Hammar; (3) David Bickford, speech to a conference on Business Crime and Risk, RSA, November 1997; (4) GCHQ manual, 1994; (5) Financial Times, April 21 1998; (6) Sunday Telegraph, March 29, 1998; (7) In from the Cold, by Laurence Lustgarten and Ian Leigh, p 516. **Graphics sources:** Central Intelligence Machinery, HMSO, 1996; MI5: the Security Service, 1996, HMSO. **Graphics:** Steve Collins. **Research:** Jane Crinion. **Richard Norton-Taylor** writes about security and intelligence services for the Guardian; **Ian Black** is our Diplomatic Editor.

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FinanceGuardian

Ministers fear defence industry shake-up could imperil national interest

EU arms pact sought

David Gow
Industrial Editor

B RITAIN and its European partners are planning an agreement to guarantee the supply of crucial defence equipment to one another as the region moves towards integration of arms production.

Defence and industry ministers from Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Spain say an agreement, perhaps in the form of a treaty, is essential to ensuring a secure flow of

equipment as Europe restructures to meet the challenge from the three big US defence groups.

The need for integration has been underlined by the fact that Europe has 10 prime contractors for military aircraft and helicopters, four for main battle tanks, 12 for missiles and 14 for tracked armoured vehicles.

If the drive for consolidation spearheaded by the British, French and German governments succeeds, it is expected that production of certain armaments will be concentrated increasingly in

one country or within one pan-European company. German firms, for instance, are keen to dominate land-based defence systems.

"If we are going to have this cross-European rationalisation it may well lead to closures and nations need to be assured that they can secure key items from another country," one British defence source said. "The days of national capability are over."

British Aerospace, which is leading the drive to restructure Europe's defence industry, is understood to be concerned, however, that closer

European integration could be blown off course by France's failure to privatise its industry, especially Aérospatiale. BAE reportedly warned that it may be forced to go its own way.

BAE is confident that its main German partner, Daimler-Benz Aerospace, a wholly owned subsidiary of Daimler-Benz, will resolve the problem of ensuring the wide spread of shareholders which it sees as critical to establishing the European Aerospace and Defence Company.

After securing a 35 per cent stake in Swedish aerospace

and defence manufacturer Saab for £269 million last week, BAE is understood to have begun preliminary talks with Spain's Casa about acquiring a stake and with Alenia, the state-owned Italian group, about extending co-operation.

Britain's vulnerability to overseas supplies was exposed during the 1991 Gulf war when Belgium, a NATO ally, refused to provide it with ammunition. A new treaty or agreement would aim to prevent further such incidents.

Ministers are also urging

companies to cut down on wasteful duplication of research and development, following sharp reductions in national budgets. According to experts at Lancaster University, European defence R&D budgets fell 55 per cent between 1985 and 1997, to \$10.6 billion, compared with \$37.4 billion in the US.

They say European companies face a choice between consolidation on a scale enabling them to compete or collaborate with American firms — or becoming niche suppliers of sub-systems for US companies.

Notebook

Single currency will affect us all



Margaret Beckett

LAST weekend European Union heads of government set in train a process which will affect the lives of everyone in the EU, and will soon be felt in economies across the world. If anyone ever doubted it, the euro is now almost real. By agreeing on which countries will

adopt the single currency, European leaders have provided the basis for a strong competitive boost to business in Europe.

The UK will not join in the first wave. This is not because we do not believe in a single currency. On the contrary, we want the single currency to succeed. But now — not least due to the inaction of our predecessors — is the wrong time for us to join. Our businesses are not prepared to accept a monetary policy which does not suit us at this point in our economic cycle.

But the Government is committed to preparing the country over the course of this Parliament so that we could join early in the next Parliament if it is in our interests to do so and if Government, Parliament and the people agree.

The UK may not be in the single currency, but much of British business will be affected by it very soon. The single currency will change the way business is done across Europe, and UK companies need to be prepared to meet the new challenges. They should also be ready to seize the competitive advantage before their continental rivals do so.

We at the Department of Trade and Industry stand ready to help.

I am not talking just about large multi-nationals, nor only those who trade abroad. Many UK businesses of all sizes and in all sectors will be directly affected by the euro from next year.

For example, a small components manufacturer with a purely domestic market might supply subcontractors working for a number of multi-nationals. Many multi-nationals have said they would expect their suppliers to be able to deal in euros from next year. What will that mean for our second-level suppliers? At the very least they should discuss the issue with their customers.

Many UK exporters are still able to trade exclusively in sterling. This may well be because their customers are content to agree the exchange risk by dealing in a range of foreign currencies from their various suppliers across Europe. But once most of those suppliers all have the same currency as the customer there will be greater

commercial pressure on the UK exporter to quote in euros. Is that exporter ready? Does he know how to deal with the exchange risks?

A single currency will increase price transparency across the different countries of the EU. It will be more difficult for companies supplying products across Europe to maintain different prices in different markets whilst hiding behind exchange rate differentials. If a British manufacturer supplies shirts to German retailers at DM40 each and to its Italian customers at 10,000 lire, how long will it be before the Germans realise that at (say) 20 euros it is paying much more than its Italian counterpart at (say) 15 euros — and demand a reduction?

Price transparency offers new strategic opportunities. In showing which companies are truly competitive and exposing others that have been sheltering behind exchange rate barriers, it can only be good for consumers and for European business generally. But it does highlight how important it is for British firms to aim to be the most competitive in Europe and to think through the way they will respond. Every management and board in every company should be thinking through this issue now and planning and preparing to take advantage of EMU.

SO THE euro will not just be a business challenge. It also offers great opportunities. Take, for instance, a small firm exporting to a single country in Europe — the Netherlands, for example. It will be much easier for that firm to extend its sales into the French or German markets if there is a single currency, and that could mean huge new market opportunities.

The Government has an important role in helping businesses to prepare. Today, in Birmingham, I am launching the next phase of an awareness campaign aimed at alerting all businesses to the potential effects of the euro from next January. Through fact sheets, a telephone line and via the internet, the Government will also be publishing more detailed information on EMU and the euro and signposting businesses to sources of specific advice.

The euro will be a reality in less than eight months' time. British businesses ignore it at their peril. The single currency will provide great opportunities to those who think carefully about it and seize the competitive advantage. But those who are not prepared will soon notice increased competition from their rivals in the euro zone. The Government can alert businesses to the issues and provide information. But ultimately it will be up to individual businessmen and women to determine how the UK rises to the euro challenge.

To find out more about how to prepare for the euro call 06456 010199, or visit the euro website at <http://euro.gov.uk>. Margaret Beckett is Secretary of State for Trade and Industry.

Tories fume but forex keeps cool

Mark Milner
Deputy Financial Editor

AS POLITICAL tensions continued to run high over the compromise presidency of the European Central Bank, foreign exchange markets chose to take a cooler line yesterday.

Conservative leader William Hague called the process leading up to the euro's approval "a fiasco of fudges" and his predecessor, John Major, warned that the ECB's independence had been undermined at the outset.

On Europe's foreign exchange markets, however, the pound strengthened against the German mark but then eased back to close little changed in Europe.

Analysts said concerns about the prospect of higher interest rates in key European economies helped keep

the pressure off the mark, despite the barrage of criticism against the compromise over the ECB presidency. The markets are wary that central banks will raise rates in an attempt to restore credibility.

London Europe's main foreign exchange market was officially closed for the bank holiday but many dealers were at their desks. Trading was said to be light.

The pound moved above DM2.97 but then slipped back to DM2.966 as the German currency was bolstered by the belief that the Bundesbank would raise interest rates.

"The markets are beginning to price in a repo rate hike in the next couple of months," said Tony Northfield, treasury economist at ABN AMRO.

The ECB deal — under which Holland's Wim Duisenberg takes on the first eight-year term as president but steps aside part-way through in favour of France's Jean-Claude Trichet — has left some German central bank officials to allege the compromise was a violation of the Maastricht treaty. "It's left a bitter taste — but the market forgets fast," said one German stock dealer.

The pound and Swiss franc, regarded as European safe havens because they are not involved in EMU, were bolstered by the conflict. "The pound is likely to be bid higher on the back of scepticism about this deal but not in a dramatic way," said Peter Luxton, economic adviser at Standard and Poor's MMS in London.



Microsoft warns on Windows

Mark Tran in New York

MICROSOFT yesterday stepped up its campaign to head off anti-trust action by claiming that any delay in the release of the Windows 98 operating system would pose "broad negative consequences" for the entire personal computer industry.

This latest salvo came in a letter to 150 Wall Street analysts, software companies and venture capitalists. Chief financial officer Greg Maffei said that Microsoft was not sure if the US Justice Department or state attorneys general would try to block the launch of Windows 98.

But, he said, the objective of the letter was to "outline the possible financial ramifications of such regulatory action".

The warning of impending trouble for the whole PC sector echoed a letter signed last week by 26 executives at America's top technology companies, including the chairman of chip maker Intel, along with Dell Computer and Compaq Computer, two leading manufacturers. They also warned against any delay of Windows 98, scheduled for release on June 24.

Mr Maffei asserted that the largest computer makers have already geared up their marketing efforts for Windows 98, but that spending would come to naught if the operating system is delayed or blocked.

Smaller firms feel the pinch

Roger Cowe

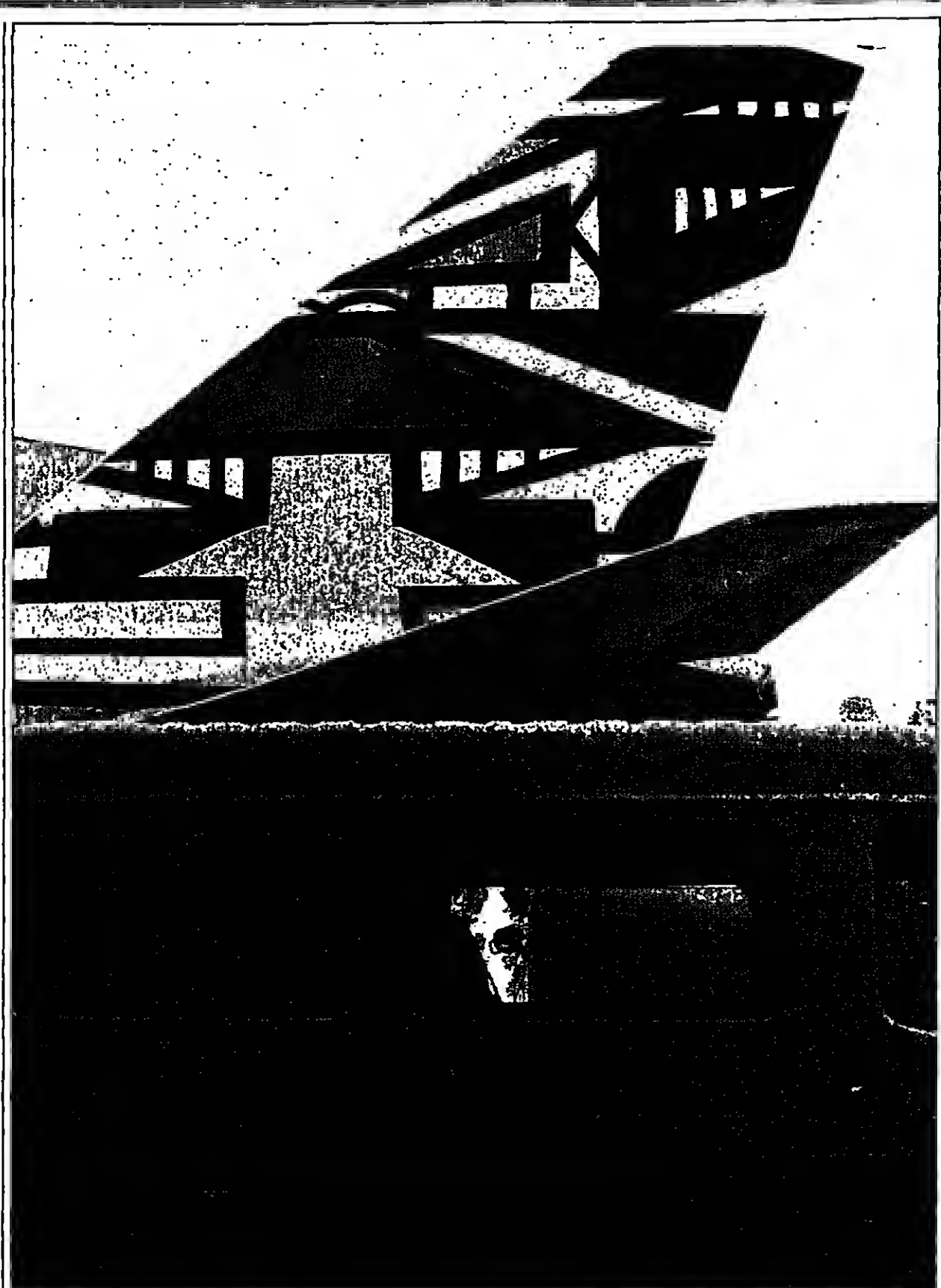
SMALLER manufacturers are hearing the brunt of a fall in exports induced by the strong pound, according to the latest survey of the sector out today.

They are more pessimistic about export orders than at any time since the survey was started by the Confederation of British Industry and accountants Pannell Kerr Forster.

As a result, this crucial sector of the economy plans to invest less than at any time in the past five years. Confidence has fallen faster than at any time since October 1992 and the smallest firms are suffering most.

Colin Perry, chairman of the CBI's Council for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), warned that the struggle to export could hit jobs. "Trading conditions for manufacturing SMEs are now very tough," he said. "With home demand falling to grow, it seems there is no longer a cushion to offset the fall in orders and output have led to a standstill in employment in a sector considered to be in the forefront of employment opportunities."

The manufacturers reported that over the past four months export orders have been falling more sharply than at the end of last year, and they expected them to fall even further.



BRITISH Airways is putting pressure on its traditional aircraft supplier Boeing with a threat to buy planes from a rival, Europe's Airbus Industrie, for the first time, writes Nicholas Bonister, Chief Business Correspondent.

The airline, which asked Boeing and Airbus to come up with "creative" proposals for replacing its fleet of 100 short-haul aircraft, is

beginning to look favourably on the Europeans.

Officials said they were more impressed by the finance and after-sales proposals put forward by Airbus than those from its American rival.

The replacement order is expected to be worth about £2.5 billion, with an initial £600 million order for 30 planes expected this summer. Until now BA has had

a good relationship with Boeing, from whom it has bought most of its planes.

BA's short-haul fleet includes seven different types of aircraft. The airline wants to replace them with planes from the Boeing 737 series or from Airbus's A319, A320 or A321 families. BA already operates 10 Airbus 320s which it inherited when it took over British Caledonian in the mid-1980s. One reason behind BA's decision to replace its short-haul fleet is new environmental legislation expected on issues such as noise and fuel efficiency.

A BA spokesman said: "The bidding process is by no means complete and we are waiting for further detailed proposals from both of the manufacturers."

PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID SILLITOE

Free ride for cowboys on the cards

Rogue hauliers could outwit digital technology, reports KEITH HARPER

COWBOY hauliers will be able to break the law undetected if supposedly tamper-proof electronic tachographs are adopted throughout Europe later this year, a government report concludes.

The "spy in the cab" manual charts on which lorry drivers record their hours of work are to be replaced by a "smart card" system which the report says is less reliable.

An independent investigation for the Department of Transport suggests that the

new system could lead to widespread fraud which would cost billions of pounds across Europe.

The report by Cambridge University's computer laboratory was called for by the Government because Britain is due to adopt the digital tachographs in July. Driving records will be stored on smart cards rather than paper charts.

Under EU proposals, each smart card will record the details of up to 28 days' driving. Longer-term records would be kept in the tachograph or

downloaded on to the operator's computer.

The report says the equipment proposed would make organised fraud almost impossible to detect. The swipe cards are not robust enough and are unreliable, researchers say.

Dishonest drivers could erase records and claim it had happened accidentally or that the computer system had crashed. Operators would be able to buy black-market discs which would enable them to replace an illegal history with a clean record simply by pressing a few buttons.

Vehicle speeds, which are particularly important when the authorities investigate accidents, would be kept on the

system only for 24 hours, the study says.

The report says the ease with which fake records can be produced will create an "intolerable burden" on the authorities and mean "complete breakdown of regulatory controls".

Even before publication of the report, the industry has been predicting delays in the change to digital records.

The Department of Transport says the report will go to other EU members for comment and is meant to help negotiations. It stresses that the details of the new deal have not been agreed but admits that there are grounds for concern about the introduction of digital tachographs.

Vodafone goes on offensive

Nicholas Bonister, Chief Business Correspondent

VODAFONE fired a new shot in the mobile phone price war yesterday by announcing that all of its off-peak charges will fall by 50 per cent from June.

The move comes two months after Don Cruickshank, the departing director-general of Ofcom, referred mobile phone charges to the Monopolies Commission, claiming that consumers were being cheated of £200 million by network operators. A Vodafone spokesman said the latest price cuts were being considered when the company announced a 16 per cent reduction in peak-rate call charges in January.

He pointed out that One-2-Call, the mobile operator half-owned by Cable & Wireless, recently allowed its customers

to carry over part of their "free" call time from one month to the next.

Vodafone is the largest British mobile operator, with 3.4 million of the country's 6 million mobile phone owners. It is followed closely by Cellnet, 60 per cent owned by British Telecom, and further back are Orange and One-2-Call.

Vodafone's latest off-peak prices are nearing the fixed-line charges offered by British Telecom. A BT spokesman admitted the gap was closing but said: "Their standing charge will be higher than ours."

From June 1, Vodafone's cheapest off-peak rate will be 1p a minute for customers using its Local Call Saver Option, which has a £2.50-a-month subscription fee.

BT's cheapest off-peak rate is 1p a minute for local calls at weekends, with a minimum charge of 4.9p.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 2.48	Germany 2.92	Malaysia 6.25	Singapore 2.50
Austria 2.52	Greece 5.13	Malta 0.83	South Africa 4.20
Belgium 60.18	Hong Kong 12.59	Netherlands 3.27	Spain 16.83
Canada 2.37	India 66.40	New Zealand 2.50	Sweden 12.68
Cyprus 0.67	Ireland 1.59	Portugal 2.44	Switzerland 2.44
Denmark 11.12	Israel 0.19	Saudi Arabia 6.15	Turkey 288.720
Finland 2.94	Italy 2.81	USA 1.6370	
France 9.75			

Supplied by NatWest (excluding rupee, shilling and indollar)

Chester with form guide

CHRIS HAWKINS	TOP FORM
2.10 Golden Slick	Queensland Star
2.40 Way Out Yonder (nb)	Queensland Star
3.10 Golden Slick	Queensland Star
4.10 Break The Rules	Queensland Star
4.40 Golden Slick	Queensland Star
4.40 Golden Slick (nb)	Queensland Star

2.10 JOSEPH HILL LILY AGES STAKES 2YO	CH4
101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1)	101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1)
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2.40 WILLIAM HARE MAIDEN STAKES 3YO	CH4
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3.10 CHESTER VASE 3YO	CH4
101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1)	101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1)
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3.40 WALKER SMITH & WAY HANDICAP	CH4
101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1)	101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1)
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4.10 EARL OF CHESTER HANDICAP 3YO	CH4
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4.40 PRINCE OF WALES HANDICAP 3YO	CH4
101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1)	101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1)
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5.00 COURSE SPECIALISTS	CH4
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5.30 RESULTS	CH4
101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1)	101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1)
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5.50 DONCASTER	CH4
101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1)	101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1)
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6.20 KEMPTON	CH4
101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1)	101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1)
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6.50 NEWCASTLE	CH4
101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1)	101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1) 101 (1)
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Racing

Cape Verdi poised to enter the Derby frame

Chris Hawkins

AFTER Cape Verdi's runaway win in the 2,000 Guineas on Sunday, discussion will take place over the next week or so in the Goldolphin camp about whether to run this outstanding filly in the Vodka Derby at Epsom.

The plan was always the Oaks and she's not entered for the Derby but the cost of supplementing her to the £75,000 and that would be no problem," said Simon Crisford, racing manager of Goldolphin. "In the next couple of weeks we plan to run our potential Derby colts and see how they get on. After that we'll make some decisions."

Cape Verdi should not be troubled to stay a mile and a half and so superior was she on Sunday that to talk in terms of taking her colts is hardly pie in the sky.

To go for the Derby would be an unorthodox move, but would add tremendous interest to the race, even though commercially it might not be the most sensible course of action for the Maktoum family. It would, however, restore some of the true competitive spirit of racing.

If Cape Verdi can reproduce the turn of foot we saw from her in the Guineas over the



Wragg... Vase hid

extra distance, it is hard to see anything living with her. The last filly to win the Epsom Derby was Fimela in 1916, while Nobiliary finished second to Grundy in 1975.

Geoff Wragg's Guineas is favourite in most lists for the Derby and his performance will be watched with interest in this afternoon's Chester Vase.

Gold breeding, Gulland (3.10), who is by the Vase winner Unfuwain, should be much better suited by the mile and a half here than he was by the mile of the Craven and is the selection to beat The Glow Worm, winner



Hills... fine record

form which looks better than any of his four rivals today. Xaar soon got behind in the Guineas, either through extreme laziness or lack of pace, but the sectional times revealed he was the fastest final furlong finisher and the second fastest through the penultimate furlong so he cannot be written off as a complete flop.

Course and distance winner Break The Rules (3.40) looks an interesting proposition with only 8st in the Walker Smith & Way Handicap, a race he won last year carrying 11lb and trained by Martin Pipe.

He is now with David Nicholls and may not be the force he once was, but has been running respectably on the all-weather and must come into the reckoning.

The well-drawn Champion Cadet (4.40) looks on a handy mark in the concluding Prince of Wales Handicap.

Tertium's late run puts Littmoden in the big time

NICK LITTMODEN, who trains at Wolverhampton racecourse, landed the biggest prize of his career when Tertium won the £40,000 Jubilee Handicap at Kempton Park yesterday, writes Chris Hawkins.

Tertium started at 20-1 and was dashing ridden by apprentice David Nicholls, who swooped inside the final furlong and drove out his mount for a two

lengths victory over Labeq and the strongly finishing Crumpton Hill.

Littmoden commented: "He should have won at Carlisle last time but hit the front too soon. He has to come late and fast."

There was big gamble in the race on Pat Eddery's month Kennemore, ridden by apprentice David Nicholls, who swooped inside the final furlong and drove out his mount for a two

lengths victory over Labeq and the strongly finishing Crumpton Hill.

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There was big gamble in the race on Pat Eddery's month Kennemore, ridden by apprentice David Nicholls, who swooped inside the final furlong and drove out his mount for a two

Brighton runners and riders

CHRIS HAWKINS	TOP FORM
2.20 King Foley	Shardlow
2.50 King Foley	Shardlow
3.20 King Foley	Shardlow
3.50 King Foley	Shardlow
4.20 King Foley	Shardlow

2.20 KING FOLEY	CH4
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2.50 LAMBERT & FOSTER STAKES	CH4
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3.20 NORTHERN RACING HANDICAP	CH4
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3.50 COURSE SPECIALISTS	CH4
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4.20 COURSE SPECIALISTS	CH4
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4.50 COURSE SPECIALISTS	CH4
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4.50 COURSE SPECIALISTS	CH4
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5.00 COURSE SPECIALISTS	CH4
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5.30 COURSE SPECIALISTS	CH4
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5.50 COURSE SPECIALISTS	CH4
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Snooker

Higgins tops game of the century

Clive Everton in Sheffield

KEN DOHERTY, the reigning champion, fought back to reduce John Higgins's 10-6 overnight lead to 13-11 after the third of the four sessions in their best-of-35-frames final of the World Championship at the Crucible Theatre.

Last May bank holiday Doherty made it a great day for the Irish by beating Stephen Hendry for the title, which the Scot had won six times in seven years. Doherty's only previous world-ranking title had been the 1993 Welsh Open.

This year he came to Sheffield having reached a quarter-final, four semi-finals and a final in his last six events but tantalisingly just short of his best form.

Largely through a cagey, conservative approach he worked his way through four matches but he knew that he would have to score more heavily to stay in contention with the prolific Higgins, who has won eight world-ranking events.

In the first half of yesterday afternoon's session, which Higgins began as 7-1 on favourite and Doherty 4-1 against, the Irishman twice narrowed the gap to three frames.

First he responded to Higgins's initial 39 with a cross-over double and a snooker behind the green, which gave him an easy red and paved the way for a winning break

of 69; then, after Higgins won the 18th with an 89, he scored a 55 which included yellows with four of his reds. But Higgins then produced a total clearance of 130; it was his 12th century of the championship, equalling Hendry's 1995 record.

That tally of centuries included three in four frames in beating Anthony Hamilton 13-9 in the last 16 and the first century hat-trick in the championship's 71-year history in overcoming John Parrott 13-11 in the quarter-final. Higgins's dozen also raised the overall championship record to 87 from the previous 49.

The 22-year-old Scot led 12-8 but 20 minutes later it was 12-10 through Doherty's breaks of 88, 40 and 89. The wind was in the Dubliner's sails and in a tense 30-minute frame it looked as if he might reduce his arrears to only one before Higgins, realising full well what an important frame this was, sank a very good brown to set up the black-ball win which gave him breathing space at 13-11.

With Higgins first in with 44, 14-10 seemed to be coming up but he faltered unexpectedly on a middle-pocket red, and Doherty's efforts of 42 and 31 closed the gap to 13-11 with the 11-frame evening session to come.

Doherty's manager Ian Doyle said: "That was the result Ken needed from the session. That was what we wanted going into it, and it will be now he like world war three with so little in it."

Tennis

Henman slows to the rhythm

Richard Jago in Hamburg

TIM HENMAN, still determined to prove he can cope with the demanding physical chess required by the slow rhythms of clay, made the right moves while disposing of the Swedish qualifier Jan Apell in the first round of the German Open yesterday.

Henman's successes have come on the three faster surfaces — grass, hard and carpet — and two outings on the red stuff in a schedule of five successive clay-court tournaments have brought only one win and a pile of dirtier than usual kit. So an emphatically taken 6-3, 6-4 first-round victory — even against someone down at 16th in the world — was more than normally welcome.

There are few easy opponents on a surface which prolongs rallies, and Henman lost to Apell in practice in Monte Carlo the week before last.

"He played a lot of drop shots then, so I was expecting that," said Henman, who was nevertheless beaten by just such a shot on the first point of the match.

After that the 12th-seeded Briton worked hard at making his movement livelier and succeeded so well that this became the most encouraging facet of his game.

Henman also hit forehands with plenty of weight and ground-strokes from both sides with more than usual top-spin, all essential ingredi-

ents for clay. The hope is that these adaptations may create the sort of transfer of clay-court skills to next month's faster surfaces which Pat Rafter achieved after reaching last year's French Open final.

The Australian, however, was often able to serve and volley on clay: Henman reckons he might attempt that more frequently in Rome next week and in Paris in three weeks' time.

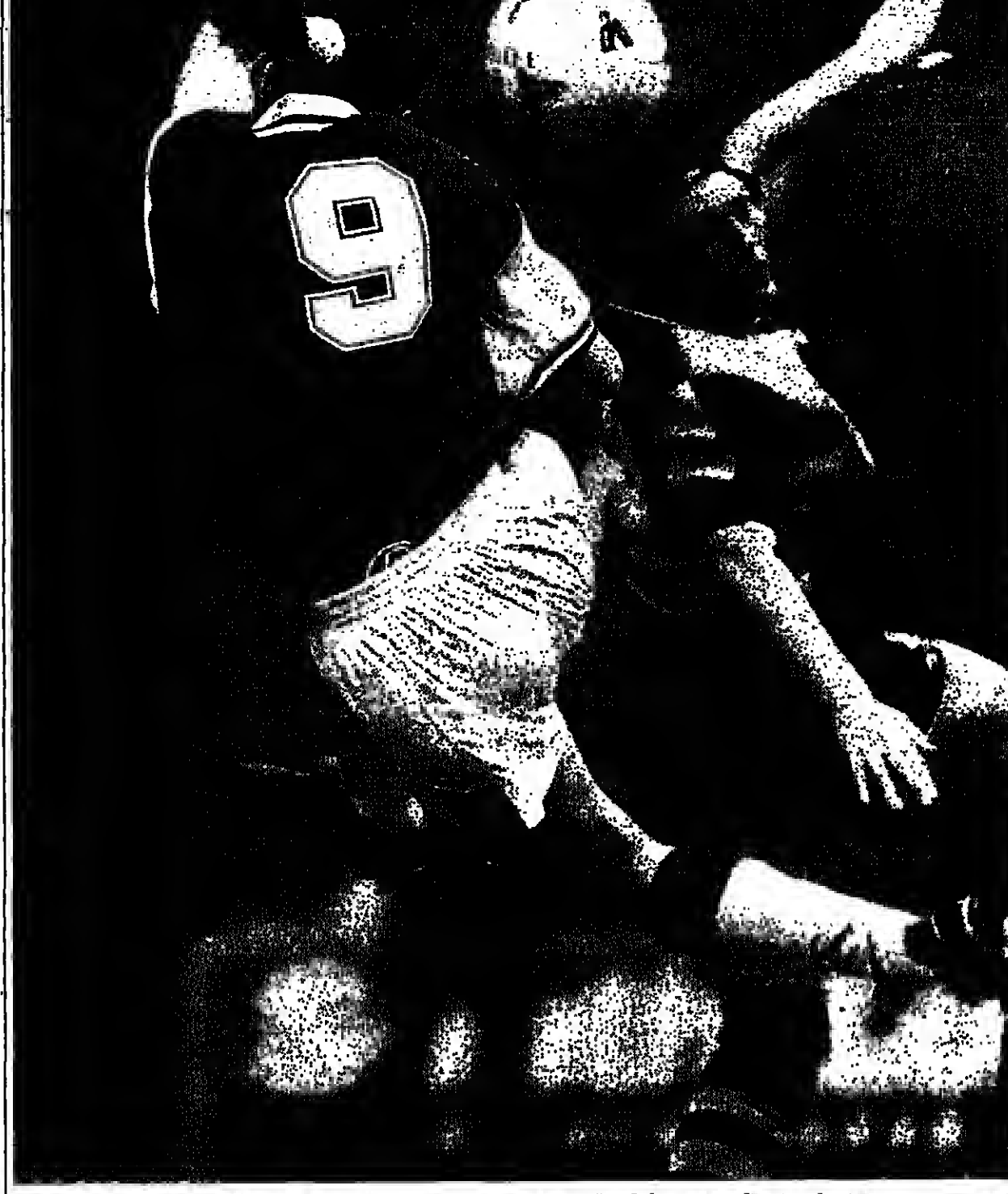
He next plays Hicham Arazi, the unpredictable Moroccan, whom he has beaten in three of his last four encounters but whose favourite surface this is.

Greg Rusedski, who may find his seeding of two difficult to justify on clay, starts today against the Spanish qualifier Emilio Alvarez, ranked 136th in the world.

The top seed Marcelo Rios could have a difficult first test against the gifted South African Wayne Ferreira, particularly as the Chilean still sounds uncertain about the elbow injury which has made this his first ATP tournament since taking away Pete Sampras's world No. 1 ranking in March.

"It's still a bit sore. I'm trying to play this week, though I am going to take care of it," Rios said. "But I'm hoping to do well."

Ferreira, who yesterday comfortably disposed of the Dutchman Jan Siemerink, the champion in Rotterdam two months ago, by 6-4, 6-2, could well have something to say about that.



Miss cue... Marianne Spacey fires home Arsenal's opening goal to level the scores after 18 minutes

JOHN MARSH

Martin Thorpe finds Arsenal's chairman basking in the glory of Wenger's musketeers
Gunners in danger of being liked

THE inhalation of breath over the question as to how a mouthful of smoke from a cigar the size of a trowel handle.

"I'm nervous to say this," began the Arsenal chairman, "because we've had some wonderful teams during my time. But this is the best in the 35 years I've been on the board."

Peter Hill-Wood represents the type of man he is and I think we were privileged that we had seen him before and therefore knew that he had the credentials to be a very good manager here."

Hill-Wood has other reasons to admire the Frenchman. "I spent four days going round Europe with him looking at training grounds," said the chairman, "and he was a really good companion, and amused me because he was very interested in the wines I chose at dinner."

As for the future, the board and Wenger will hold talks on a new contract after the FA Cup final, though the manager, who has one year to run on his current three-year deal, knows already he will stay and has the money to sign new players.

As one might expect, Wenger will continue to spend with care. "It is not easy to be intelligent when you have money," he says. "Also, because we will need a good squad for the Champions League, we must make sure we do not have too many players not playing regularly because then you lose the team spirit that is your strength."

When asked if Ian Wright would be staying next season, Wenger replied: "I think so," though the manager's big problem in conquering Europe next season will be Dennis Bergkamp's fear of flying. The classy Dutchman, still struggling to be fit for the Cup final, will not play in away games outside mainland Europe.

Anyway, for now Arsenal are keeping their feet on the ground and savouring the return of the title to Highbury. Do you think Hill-Wood was asked that Arsenal were now in a position to become England's premier club? His reply contained a hint of incomprehension: "I thought we always were."

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Football

Women's FA Cup final
Arsenal 3 Croydon 2

Arsenal sew up a double of sorts

Trevor Haylett
sees another trophy added to the Highbury collection

ARSENAL for the Double? Their captain Stan Williams, least Tony Adams to a double of sorts yesterday when an injury-time winner gave them the women's FA Cup over a Croydon side who had lost in the League Cup final too to their north London opponents.

That earlier game had been decided on penalties after 120 minutes failed to yield a single goal. Both league fixtures also finished as draws, the second last Thursday which had ensured that Arsenal could not win the league title. That went to Everton.

So no one at the New Den would have been surprised had extra-time been called for. Then Marianne Spacey launched another of her long-range free-kicks. Louise Cooper could only push the ball on to the bar and, although she then blocked the initial follow-up, Kelley Fead stooped to conquer and head home.

Lucky Arsenal! Certainly unlucky Croydon who, in a closely contested final, had given their opponents much food for thought and, after bringing the scores level early in the second half, were looking the more likely to score as extra-time loomed.

Yet to wear red and white is seemingly to have God on your side these days. The Arsenal vice-chairman David Dein was forced to cut short his celebrations after seeing Arsenal's manager's side clinch the Premiership at Highbury the day before to uncook yet more champagne.

For Vic Akers, general manager of Arsenal's women, a role he combines with being kit manager for

Adams, Ian Wright and Co. it was another special moment.

"It's been a marvellous couple of days," he said. "For me this ranks alongside yesterday's achievement. My heart and soul is with the girls because I know what effort they put into the game. We're delighted."

The south Londoners received an early break when Julie Fletcher's run was checked by Kirsty Peallling, her opposite No. 2, and Joe Broadhurst scored from the penalty. A former Arsenal player, she enjoyed that moment and proceeded to lead the line impressively, leaning on good support from Kerry Davis.

The Arsenal equaliser in the 18th minute was a strange affair as Spacey attempted a speculative volley after England's 18-year-old striker Rachel Yankey had gained possession before dropping a perfect chip pass on to her colleague's boot. Although she could not get hold of her shot, Spacey saw the ball loop up beyond a startled Cooper and bounce in off the far post.

Cooper will have nightmares about Arsenal's second because she had the chance to dispossess Yankey but took her eye off the ball and allowed the pacy Arsenal striker to slide it into an unguarded net.

Croydon might have fallen apart after that but came back strongly, though their 58th-minute equaliser owed a great deal to good fortune when the Arsenal goalkeeper Sarah Reed hurried her clearance and crashed the ball into her woodwork.

After seeing Arsenal's manager's side clinch the Premiership at Highbury the day before to uncook yet more champagne.

For Vic Akers, general manager of Arsenal's women, a role he combines with being kit manager for

Stephen Bradford

ARRIGO SACCHI is set to become Atletico Madrid's 21st coach under their president Jesus Gil.

Sacchi, who led Milan to two European Cups and took Italy to the 1994 World Cup final, will succeed Raddy Antic, though Gil said points of his contract had to be resolved.

In Atletico terms, given Gil's hire-and-fire reputation, Antic's three seasons in charge represented an anomaly. But he was unable to repeat his initial success of winning the Spanish double in 1996.

With the club lying ninth and Europe a fading prospect, Gil told the former Luton player his job would be safe if Atletico beat Mallorca on Sunday. They lost 2-1.

Alain Giresse, one of the midfield quartet that propelled France to the 1984 European Championship, was named as coach of Paris St Germain yesterday. Meanwhile in Cannes,

Jamaica drew 0-0 with their fellow World Cup qualifiers Saudi Arabia.

West Ham have completed the signing of the French international midfielder Marc Koller on a four-year deal from the German club Karlsruhe.

Crystal City will be hoping that the minor fiasco during their promotion celebrations was an omen for next season. After touring the city in an open-top bus the players were presented with their medals as Second Division runners-up.

except that the rightful owners of the cup were Middlesbrough. They had to hand back the First Division mementos, although City's vice-chairman John Laycock quipped: "We're going to keep them for next year."

Barry Town stole a march on Arsenal by yesterday completing the Welsh double. Having run away with the league they beat Bangor 5-4 on penalties to win the cup after the final had finished 1-1 after extra-time.

Sport in brief

Ice Hockey

Montreal Canadiens are on course for a 29th Stanley Cup triumph after eliminating Pittsburgh Penguins with a 3-0 victory in Game Six of the NHL Eastern Conference quarter-final play-offs, writes Vic Bealfielder. Canadiens, who last won the cup in 1993, now face the Buffalo Sabres.

American hopes of reaching the World Championship's second round dimmed after a surprise 3-1 defeat by France in Zurich yesterday. The Americans, who are awaiting players from the NHL, must now beat Sweden to ensure survival.

Cycling

Chris Boardman returns to competition today in the Tour of Romandie, a six-day stage race starting in Basle. It contains two time-trials. The former world and Olympic champion, runner-up in last year's race, was hit by flu in February and has moderated his training regime.

Basketball

Peter Knowles, who has been in long-running war of words with the national coach László Nemethi, quit as the English Basketball Association's chairman yesterday.

Results

Football

FA CUP FINAL

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Tennis

ATP CHALLENGER

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Basketball

NBA Play-offs

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Baseball

MLB Play-offs

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Ice Hockey

NHL Play-offs

Leeds (9) 55, 17

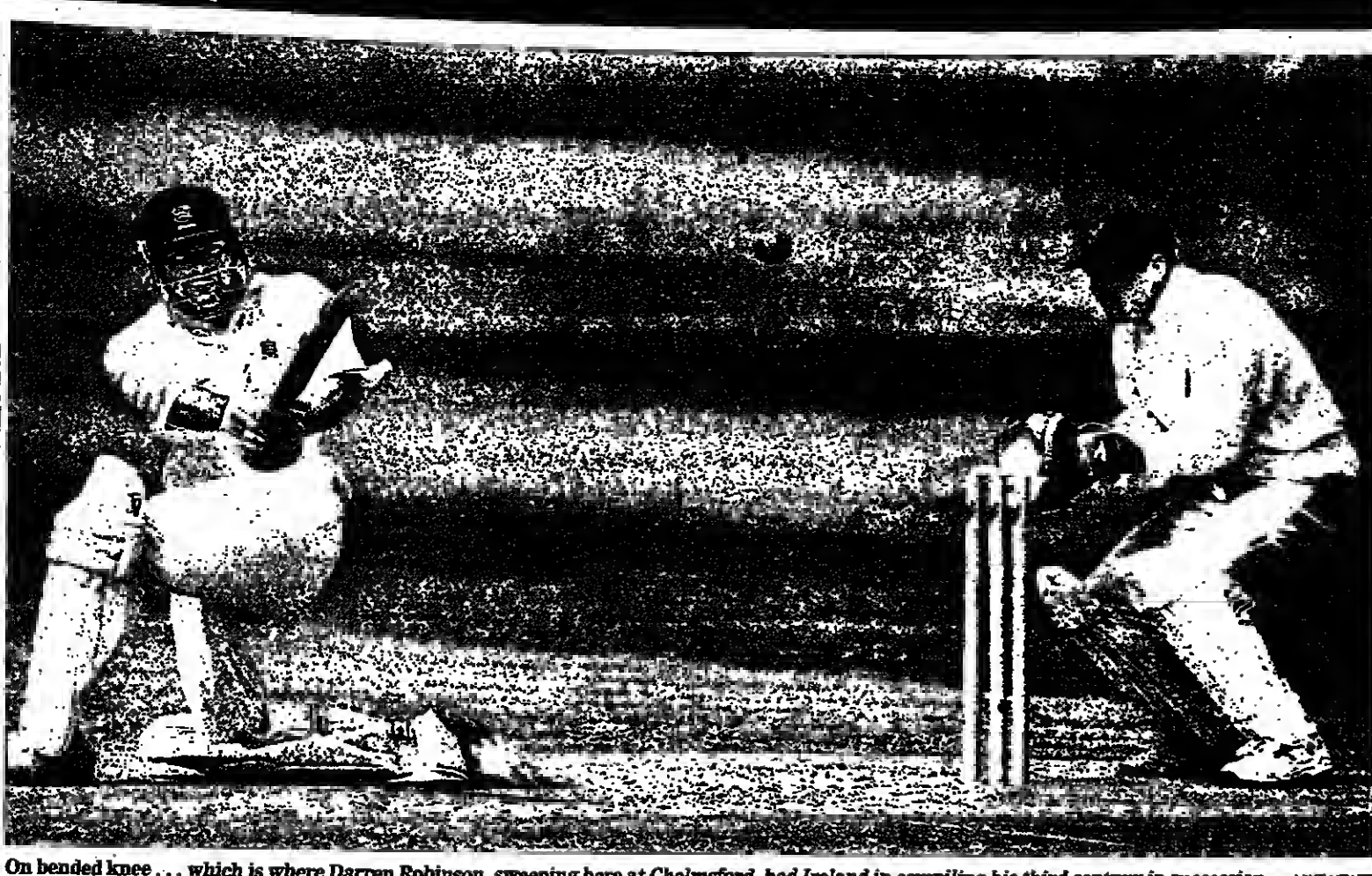
Benson and Hedges Cup

Essex out of Ireland's reach

AT CLOSING time there was still an Irishman on three left standing, but they could not win the argument with Essex, or more particularly Darren Robinson. Ireland's 188 for seven was respectable enough, not so in reply to the home team's 359 for seven at Chelmsford.

Robinson's 114 off 129 balls, his third century in succession, won him a second Gold Award in three days. Nasser Hussain, with 71 from 68 balls, and Ronnie Irani, whose 59 from 45 deliveries included six fours and three sixes, also enjoyed themselves.

Nell Johnson, the Zimbabwean who topped Leicestershire's championship batting last summer, scored a positive 53 with one six and seven fours for Essex, but the Irish had already been swept aside.



On bended knee... which is where Darren Robinson, sweeping here at Chelmsford, had Ireland in compiling his third century in succession

Leicester v Warwickshire

Meltdown narrowly averted for M&M

Andy Wilson at Grace Road

DAVID MILLIS and Alan Mullally owe Phil Simmons and Paul Nixon a beer or three.

Leicestershire's double-M opening attack were the major culprits in one of the most profligate bowling performances in the 27-year history of this competition. But their country could still reach the quarter-finals after 89 from Simmons and an in-

teligent, unbeaten 36 from Nixon condemned Warwickshire to their first limited-overs defeat this season.

Warwickshire's total of 263 for six included 34 in wides, eight no balls and 11 leg byes — a B & H record of 53 extras, and almost six extra overs — with Mullally and Millis heading the roll of shame.

Mullally bowled 11 wides, including three in the day's first over, while Millis had five in his opening three-over spell, then returned to bowl

five more in his fourth over of the day — also his last.

That was not the end of it, as the first ball of Leicestershire's reply, from Ed Gidkins, went for four wides and Ben Smith was later stumped off a wide from Neil Smith — having been dropped by Keith Piper off the previous ball.

But the Bears bowlers were, comparatively, models of accuracy, conceding only seven more wides and two no balls, and it took some special batting from Simmons, Nixon

and Iain Sutcliffe to record the three-wicket win.

Sutcliffe, fresh from a match-winning century in Nottingham on Saturday, notched another 50 from 75 balls with eight boundaries. But his flick to Brian Lara at midwicket was the first of three wickets in 12 balls for Smith, and with Ashley Giles also claiming three, and Chris Lewis run out for a golden duck, Leicestershire's chances rested on the broad shoulders of Simmons.

The Trinidadian carried the burden lightly, despite twice needing treatment on a stiff neck, and dispatched both Gidkins and Giles for two sixes apiece in a 75-ball innings which also included five fours.

His dismissal, superbly caught by Trevor Penney at deep square leg with 21 needed, could have spelt the end for Leicestershire but Nixon hit Giles's next two balls over midwicket for six and four, and wrapped it up

with another six off Smith with three balls to spare.

Warwickshire's innings had been built around two partnerships. First the left-handers, Lara and David Hemp, put on 75 in 15 overs, Lara dominant with 45 from 52 balls.

Then Penney and Dougie Brown steered the Bears from 134 for four in the 28th over to 250 in the 48th before Brown went for 60 from 68 deliveries, Penney ending unbeaten with 57 from 56.

Derbyshire v Yorkshire

Cork under pressure

David Hopps at Derby

DOMINIC CORKE's captaincy of Derbyshire is proving about as fulfilling as Marie's Wedding. After months of expectation reality has intervened with depressing predictability.

In contrast to Muriel, who in the film hitched herself to a champion swimmer, it will be as much that Corke can do to keep his young charges aloof from the temptation of a quarter-final place than a 14-point lead in the championship has been established without their Australian, Darren Lehmann, but, as he embarks upon his second season, only the most prejudiced of judges

could still remain blind to his colossal presence.

Lehmann's unbeaten 102 was another mighty contribution. Blessed with a quick eye and thumping forearms, he dictates terms from the outfield, just as another left-handed Australian, Michael Bevan, did before him.

Yesterday was not a day for the pulverising drives that remain Lehmann's hallmark on flat pitches. Instead he guided and deflected effortlessly, lofting the ball only once, in the final over, when he made room to hoist Cork over long-off for a six to bring up his hundred.

Only Anthony McGrath began to rival his certainty and his half-century required a let-off when, on 38, Vince Clarke failed to hold a difficult chance at slip off Paul Aldred. Aldred had McGrath stumped off a legside wide soon afterwards and took the

additional wickets of David Byas and Bradley Parker.

Cork is striving for ingenuity and finding mostly whimsy. To launch Derbyshire's innings with two experimental openers, himself and Ian Blackwell, always had a limited chance of success on a pitch far more exacting than Yorkshire's 271 for seven would suggest.

Blackwell, envisaging a single to the wicketkeeper, would have been run out for seven had Gavin Hamilton not illegally broken the stumps at the bowler's end. Chris Silverwood, full of early-season vim, caused Cork to chop on and had Adrian Rollins, Craig White bowled Clarke and had Blackwell caught.

From a bare-baited 58 for four, Kim Barnett chosa respectability, achieved his 50 then heave-hoed to mid-on. Cork has a lot to occupy him.

Gloucestershire v Somerset

Trescothick effort in vain

David Foot at Nevill Road

MARCUS Trescothick, not so long ago seen as an England prospect to open the innings, has more recently struggled to overcome the technical demons and ironicaly has found himself played more as a bowler.

But his innings here, a useful Bristol crowd went some way towards relieving a little of the immediate pre- and post-war battles between these two counties over the bank holiday. They were never too generous in spirit, maybe things have changed a little.

Gloucestershire even gave Somerset permission, for additional match practice one assumes, to include more than the stipulated number of senior players

for a second XI fixture on this ground on Friday.

Sent in yesterday, Gloucestershire reached 234 for seven with vigorous, sensible batting by Tony Wright, finally stranded as he backed up impetuously, Bobby Dawson, Mark Alleyne — out to a fine gully catch — and Tony Windows. The seam bowling was tight, though Murtaza Ahmed, in his first appearance of the season, continued to look rather airborne.

The Somerset reply was a calculated one. Graham Rose, going well, was out to a misplaced slog; Rob Turner went to a sharp return catch. Dermot Reeve improvised and scammed as if he had never been away. But there remained a fateful naivety about the way Somerset sacrificed wickets.

Gloucestershire, Jon Lewis in particular, exploited the tactical shortfall. In a hindering finish they scored 91 off the last 10 overs, 51 off four.

Lewis belted his 33 from 18 deliveries, including two sixes and four fours. He followed up with two wickets and, notwithstanding some ragged fielding, earned himself the Gold Award.

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Taylor keen to lead one more Ashes

MARK TAYLOR is expected to officially inform the Australian board today that he wants to continue as the Test captain until at least next winter's Ashes series, despite his disgruntled comments after being replaced by Steve Waugh and his group match at the Oval.

The Englishman who may well be tossing up between Taylor, Alec Stewart, could manage only 19 of Surrey's 263 against the British and Irish in their B & H Cup group match at the Oval.

The young Donns were eventually beaten by 105 runs but it was no academic exercise for the defending champions, with the Gold Award going to Mark Chilton, currently a student at Durham, for an all-star four for 28 with his accurate seamers.

Chilton, with one appearance for Lancashire behind him, trapped Ben Hollis at lbw, caught-and-bowled his brother Adam and then had both Nadeem Shahid and Jason Ratcliffe caught.

The Worcestershire captain, Tom Moody followed up by taking the palm at New Road where the Scots were hampered by six wickets.

The Australian took four scalps as Scotland struggled to total 140 and then clubbed a 43-ball half-century. Moody added 81 in 64 overs with Graeme Hick (61 not out) after Scotland had dismissed the openers inside two overs.

Graeme Archer's run-a-bull 70 powered Notts to 278 against the home side Northamptonshire and his leg-spinning team-mate Paul Strang stepped in with four wickets to secure the 35-run win.

Scoreboard

Benson and Hedges Cup	
Essex v Warwickshire	
Essex	359
Warwickshire	263
Derbyshire v Yorkshire	
Derbyshire	271
Yorkshire	102
Gloucestershire v Somerset	
Gloucestershire	234
Somerset	91

DERBYSHIRE v YORKSHIRE	
Derbyshire Yorkshire won by 56 runs.	
A McGrath	31
A Clegg	27
A Duggan	20
D C Smith	18
D C Lammiman	not out
D J Gough	10
G Pinner	9
J A Clegg	8
D Gough	8
M K Hamilton	not out
Extras (bat, wld, nb)	36
Total (for 43.3 overs)	277
Total (for 75.38 overs)	
Derbyshire	271
Yorkshire	102
Did not bat	18
Derbyshire Derbyshire 10-0-4-4-2; McGrath 3-1-3-2; Clegg 3-1-3-2; Duggan 3-1-3-2; Smith 3-1-3-2; Lammiman 3-1-3-2; Pinner 3-1-3-2; Clegg 3-1-3-2; Gough 3-1-3-2; Hamilton 3-1-3-2; Duggan 3-1-3-2; Smith 3-1-3-2; Lammiman 3-1-3-2; Pinner 3-1-3-2; Clegg 3-1-3-2; Gough 3-1-3-2; Hamilton 3-1-3-2; Duggan 3-1-3-2; Smith 3-1-3-2; Lammiman 3-1-3-2; Pinner 3-1-3-2; Clegg 3-1-3-2; Gough 3-1-3-2; Hamilton 3-1-3-2; Duggan 3-1-3-2; Smith 3-1-3-2; Lammiman 3-1-3-2; Pinner 3-1-3-2; Clegg 3-1-3-2; Gough 3-1-3-2; Hamilton 3-1-3-2; Duggan 3-1-3-2; Smith 3-1-3-2; Lammiman 3-1-3-2; Pinner 3-1-3-2; Clegg 3-1-3-2; Gough 3-1-3-2; Hamilton 3-1-3-2; Duggan 3-1-3-2; Smith 3-1-3-2; Lammiman 3-1-3-2; Pinner 3-1-3-2; Clegg 3-1-3-2; Gough 3-1-3-2; Hamilton 3-1-3-2; Duggan 3-1-3-2; Smith 3-1-3-2; Lammiman 3-1-3-2; Pinner 3-1-3-2; Clegg 3-1-3-2; Gough 3-1-3-2; Hamilton 3-1-3-2; Duggan 3-1-3-2; Smith 3-1-3-2; Lammiman 3-1-3-2; Pinner 3-1-3-2; Clegg 3-1-3-2; Gough 3-1-3-2; Hamilton 3-1-3-2; Duggan 3-1-3-2; Smith 3-1-3-2; 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GLoucestershire v Somerset	
Gloucestershire	271
Somerset	102
GLoucestershire	
R C Griffiths D Royle	271
M C Harwood D R Turner	17
M C Harwood C Turner D Treaclock	17
A Wright not out	81
M C Harwood R de Munnick J Admard	81
M C Harwood C Parsons P Hammond	81
M C Harwood C Parsons B Burns	81
J Lewis not out	17
Extras (10, 14, 15, 16)	21
Total (75 overs)	271
Field off wides 25, 52, 193, 177, 218	237
Runnings Outs 10-35-1; 10-35-1	

SURREY v BRITISH UNIVERSITIES	
The Ovals Surrey won by 105 runs.	
CURRENT	
A D Brown c House & Leather	30
T A J Senior c Leath	2
G Martin-Jenkins	1
B C Hollislee low b Chilton	23
G P Thomas c Chilton b Huston	23
M Rutherford run out	4
A J Hollislee c b Chilton	4
M Rutherford c b Chilton	4
J D Phillips c Laveridge D Chilton	4
I G K Sealby c Chilton	4
M Rutherford	4
M P Sealby run out	12
M Rutherford c Sealby b Huston	12
Excess (44, 56, 96, 102)	
Total (43.1 overs)	
Surrey 277, 87, 105, 105, 196, 201.	
British Universities 102, 26, 26, 26, 26, 26.	
Surrey batsmen: Jones 3-4-45, Sealby 3-4-45, Hollislee 1-0-55-1, Laveridge 3-1-35-2, Thomas 1-0-25-4, Phillips 1-0-25-4, Martin-Jenkins 1-0-25-4, Brown 1-0-25-4.	
BRITISH UNIVERSITIES	
A "Sing low b Sealby"	4
J P Pymont run out	4
M Huston b Sealby	4
G R Laveridge c Rasthrie	4
M Sealby	4
W J House c Sealby Martin-Jenkins	4
A J Hollislee	4
M Sealby low b A J Hollislee	4
M Sealby Martin-Jenkins at Sturven	4
T C B Rasthrie run out	4
D Sealby c Sealby b Sealby	4
D Sealby c Sealby b Sealby	4
B C Hollislee	4
M K Sealby c Sealby D C Hollislee	4
M Sealby c Sealby Sealby	4
M Sealby Sealby	4
Total (43.3 overs)	
Surrey 277, 87, 105, 105, 196, 201.	
British Universities 102, 26, 26, 26, 26, 26.	
Surrey batsmen: Jones 3-4-45, Sealby 3-4-45, Hollislee 1-0-55-1, Laveridge 3-1-35-2, Thomas 1-0-25-4, Phillips 1-0-25-4, Martin-Jenkins 1-0-25-4, Brown 1-0-25-4.	
Group Tables	
Surrey v Derbyshire	
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Sailing

Chessie holds rest at bay

CHESIE RACING, sailing in her home waters, was first to the mouth of Chesapeake Bay as the Whitbread Round the World Race fleet started the 3,990-mile eighth leg to La Rochelle.

Appropriately the prize for winning the inshore dash had been put up by her own owner George Collins.

Shifting winds and thunderstorms overnight meant little sleep for the nine crews but by yesterday morning Chessie, skippered by John Kostick, was reaching under a spinnaker in an easterly north-westerly and she took only 12 hours to reach the bridge and tunnel between Cape Henry and Cape Charles; two years ago boats in a race to Newport took 2 1/2 days.

She was less than half a mile ahead of Knut Frostad's Norwegian Kveener as they emerged into the Atlantic Ocean, and Grant Dalton's Merit Cup took second place as the fleet headed north-east to clear the shoal waters at the bay entrance. The overall race leader Paul Cayard with EF Language took third, having been next to last at the start.

Less than three miles covered seven of the boats and none diverged from the rest as they sailed close-hauled into what was now a 10-knot south-easterly. They have two options as they start across the Atlantic: go more to the north to follow the great-circle route, which is shorter, or carry on to the east to take advantage of the two-knot current of the Gulf Stream.

SPORTS NEWS 15

News from the front

Gary Halpin

Staggering conclusion hurts a lot

GIANLUCA VIALLI expressed concern recently that Mark Hughes was playing his fourth game for Chelsea in a fortnight and that he was beginning to splutter. I know how Hughes feels. At London Irish we have played five games in 15 days and, like many other clubs, are staggering towards the end of the season.

This is the downside of the professional game: the demands on some players are verging on the ridiculous. When we played Bath a week ago they were relatively fresh but last night after taking the first quarter, fixture congestion can be dangerous in a sport as physically demanding as rugby.

There are some players, though, who are amazingly resilient as well as lucky. Paul Wallace was playing his 33rd game of the season when he propped against us for Saracens at Vicarage Road on Sunday. One of the few Lions players from last summer to maintain his form throughout the domestic season, he has no qualms about touring with Ireland in South Africa this summer.

Paul followed me into the Irish team and I knew the writing was on the wall as soon as I saw him. No one could be further from the old-style Tolly-shaped prop. Here is a real new-age player: fantastic physique, not an ounce of excess fat and very, very strong.

He has kept the perfect balance between astute and powerful. He is similar to Jeff Probst in that he gets into some awkward positions and is often on the edge of being penalised. But his strength allows him to get very low and cut into the opposition hooker.

Wallace has narrow hips and is flexible in the scrum, an orthodox scrumming. Because he is not a giant he is at a disadvantage sometimes when he meets a really good loose-head but in another season or so I think he could challenge New Zealand's Olo

Brown as the best tight-head in world rugby.

After our defeat of Quins 10 days ago our elation lasted hours. After the defeat at Bath the disappointment seemed to hang around for days. We came very close to beating Wallace's Saracens but despite our improved form of recent weeks seem destined to have to play for our survival in the top division via play-off games against Rotherham.

If the play-offs are to be our lifeline we'll just have to bite the bullet. But I feel slightly aggrieved that, when Saracens finished in one of the two bottom places two years ago, relegation was abandoned. Saracens re-grouped and the rest is history. We've beaten Rotherham in the cup this season and now just have to grit our teeth and run with it.

ON THE international front, the Ireland selectors have made some bold choices for South Africa. One of the new faces is another Wallace, Paul, and Richard's brother David, a flanker who is a hybrid. He has the strength of Paul and the speed of Richard.

I am proud that the Irish players are committed to the tour which has not been beset by the kind of difficulties experienced by England, whose players have been dropping like ninespins.

Other new faces in our national team will be the London Irish loose-head Justin Fitzpatrick and the equally powerful Shannon prop John Hayes. David Heffernan of Thomond College is a little scrum-half in the Jacques Fouroux mould. They could all be making their pitch for places in next year's World Cup.

Meanwhile, I remain convinced that Newcastle will win the Premiership title, a view I held before their 27-10 victory over Leicester yesterday. When we played them earlier in the season they had absolute certainty in themselves; there was no sense of panic. When you're winning you don't feel weary.

Motor Sport

McRae ends in front after day of rain and disqualification

DAVID WILLIAMS in Ajaccio appears to suit his Pirellis, he has no liking for sodden asphalt. "It's the worst surface but we're competitive and I can't really complain," the Scot said.

"It's a decent lead at this stage," he added, though the forecast remains uncertain for the two remaining days of the 711-mile rally. A repeat of his 1997 victory by no means foregoes conclusion.

Richard Burns is the top Mitsubishi driver in eighth place after Tommi Makinen's retirement with an electrical problem. Although currently out of the points, Burns is in touch with the leaders and doing better than expected on a rally which is notoriously difficult for the newcomer in favourable conditions, let alone when swirling cloud and standing water are additional hazards.

Leslie first to double up but still only one of the chasing pack

DAVID LESLIE, in a Nissan, yesterday became the first driver to win two rounds of the year's Auto Trader British Touring Car Championship — but still does not lead the title race.

Leslie is sixth behind James Thompson, whose consistency kept him in the lead despite having failed to record a victory.

Leslie won yesterday's feature race at Donington Park from pole position, returning to the circuit in third place after his mandatory pit-stop and reclaiming the lead when the two cars ahead of him pitted.

The Scot won by six seconds from the defending champion Alain Menu but remains 20 points adrift of Thompson, in a Honda, in the standings after crashing out of the sprint race.

Leslie, also a winner at Silverstone last week, collided with Menu's team-mate Jason Plato four laps from the end as Vauxhall's John Cleland became the fifth different driver to taste success this year.

"I was very disappointed about the first race but I think we more than made up for it in the second," said Leslie. "But we can't afford to stop developing the car or the others will be past us in a flash."

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SportsGuardian

Runners-up complete home formalities



Jump start... the Leeds goalkeeper Nigel Martyn is beaten by Ryan Giggs's header which gave Manchester United an early lead at Old Trafford yesterday

CLIVE BRINKELL

Premiership: Manchester United 3 Leeds United 0

Full house, empty victory

David Lacey

MANCHESTER United are about as eager to wear the mantle of erstwhile champions as trend-setters asked to don hand-me-downs. As runners-up to Arsenal in the Premiership round of next season's Champions League is assured, but at Old Trafford yesterday nobody was celebrating silver medals.

Instead the majority of the usual 55,000-plus crowd commiserated with Alex Ferguson's players for winning nothing this time except applause, and even that had begun to fade with the team's departure from Europe followed by Arsenal's remorseless and ultimately successful pursuit of the championship. Leeds United's fans turned up

to gloat noisily at their rivals' failure. One could hardly blame them. After all, it had been a long time.

Manchester United rounded off their season at home with a comfortable victory over the first side to defeat them in the league this time when Wetherall's goal at Elland Road in late September had ended an unbeaten start of eight games. That was the day Roy Keane suffered the cruciate ligament damage which put Ferguson's captain out for the rest of the season.

So there was a touch of nemesis in Manchester United's mood, although at times it was clear there were people on the pitch who knew it was all over. Nevertheless Leeds, their UEFA Cup place secured, provided a stiff enough challenge for Gunnar Halle to get himself sent off in the second half for a second bookable offence and there was even some pushing and shoving a little later.

Halle's dismissal brought the referee Gary Willard's number of red cards this season to eight. Six yellow cards left him in bookings short of his hundred. Yet only one of those he issued here seemed unnecessary and that was when a tired Gary Pallister inadvertently ran into the back an equally weary Alf-Inge Haaland in the closing minutes.

Understandably Manches-

Whatever Sheringham is saving for England in the World Cup one trusts it will be worth the wait

ter United's football flickered fitfully. Some of their players seemed more interested than others. Today Sheringham appeared to be treading water until substituted by Brian McClair. Whatever Sheringham is saving for England in the World Cup one trusts it will be worth the wait. Ryan Giggs, on the other hand, performed as if the title was still there to be won.

There are ways of playing and Leeds employed a system which has been serving them well, particularly in away games. Again Lucas Radebe played between a back four and a middle four, with Jimmy Floyd-Hassell, looking to hold the ball up in the hope of quick support.

Yet there is still a considerable difference between Derby on an off-day and Manchester United on a dog day, as Leeds quickly discovered. With David Beckham frequently tucking in alongside

Paul Scholes and Nicky Butt, Leeds' movements tended to run out of space in midfield, leaving Hassellink a lonely figure vainly claiming free-kicks as he tried to take on David May and Pallister.

After five minutes Ian Harte's impulsiveness cost Leeds dear. The left-back committed himself early as Gary Neville took Pallister's long pass on the right and, after the Manchester United defender had just managed to keep the ball in play, he produced a telling centre from which Giggs outpumped the centre-backs to head past Nigel Martyn.

On the half-hour Denis Irwin's cross from the left found Harte holding Sheringham down before the striker could rise to meet it and Irwin put the penalty away.

Towards the interval the match started to be overtaken by end-of-season ennui but it roused itself sufficiently for the second half to produce a

third goal quickly followed by the departure of Halle. Two minutes before the hour Beckham drove the ball low into the near corner of the net; two minutes past it Halle, shown the yellow card earlier for a foul on Irwin, saw red for fouling Wes Brown, one of Manchester's substitutes.

Jasp Stam, Manchester United's £10 million signing from PSV Eindhoven, signed autographs in the stand and felt sure the championship would return to Old Trafford next season. Well he would, wouldn't he. But Ferguson's spending will not stop there if the club are serious about renewing their quests at home and abroad.

Manchester United (4-4-2): Van Der Gouw; G. Neville, May (Brown, 60min), Pallister, Irwin (P. Neville, 45); Beckham, Scholes, Butt, Giggs; Sheringham (McClair, 60), Cole.

Leeds United (4-4-1-1): Martyn; Kelly, Wetherall, Hodge (Hopkin, 60), Harte (P. Scholes, 75); Radebe, Haaland, Bowyer, Kewell; Hassellink.

Referee: G. Willard (Worthing).

Fan-shaped pressure on City of gloom



Jim White

ACCORDING to the weather report yesterday morning, while the rest of the country was basking in some early spring sunshine, a thick pall of cloud had descended on Manchester. Though the forecaster muttered about weak fronts coming down from Scotland, this was clearly a man-made gloom, a new spin on global warming, the climate catching the mood of the local population.

Manchester was not a happy town yesterday: one team losing its title, the other relegated deep into the twilight zone. But for the red portion of the city there was consolation. At least United had lost the race to a better team.

Alex Ferguson, despite his image, is generous in defeat when he has time to come to terms with it. And he voiced the opinion of all right minds when he pointed out that Arsenal are worthy champions, the best team in the land these past few months, efficient, strong and, above all, attractive to watch.

In those parts of Manchester still painted blue, however, there was not the merest hint of a silver lining. City had gone down from a division packed with poor sides, most of whom had finished above them.

Colin Schindler, the television producer responsible for Lovejoy, has just written a book and a BBC film about being a Manchester City fan. Called "Manchester United Ruined My Life". It is an entertaining autobiography cleverly named (if only because books with the words Manchester and United on their cover tend to sell better than any other in the football publishing market).

But is a deliberately ironic title. As the book makes clear, like all Blues Schindler knows the true score: it is Manchester City that has ruined his life.

How the hopes and expectations of such a loyal crew of followers have been let down so systematically is one of the scandals of modern football. Through the '90s City have behaved as if red fifth columnists had infiltrated the club in order to bring it to its knees. The comedy procession of sacked managers, the boardroom shenanigans, the

apparent contractual obligation to sell decent players and buy in worse replacements at twice the price has all been part of it - plus an abject inability to prioritise.

It is said that Francis Lee, the last chairman of the club, was tremendously proud of the corporate entertaining facilities he had introduced at Maine Road. He would show interested parties round and boast of the wide variety of claret available on his wine list, apparently unconcerned about the wide variety of carthorse out on his pitch.

There is Malcolm Shotton at Oxford United, for instance. Or, more painfully for City followers, there is their former boss Alan Ball at Portsmouth. And both these managers led their new clubs to safety with none of the resources Royle had at his disposal.

Crucially, though, neither Shotton nor Ball was faced with City's crowd. Failure in front of 7,000 at the Manor Ground is nothing like failure before 30,000 at Maine Road. Shotton's players could relax into their task in a way Royle's never could. Every time the City team walked out, they were carrying the baggage of all that expectation, all that faith, not to mention the guilt at having failed the supporters so consistently for so long.

This is the ultimate irony of City's vertiginous fall: such was the inadequacy of the players and the board, the fantastic loyalty of their fans became a burden rather than an inspiration.

ASTONISHINGLY, though, there are still flickering signs of the crowd's legendary humour. Recently a friend was invited to lunch at Maine Road (and all the turmoil it seems the important business still goes on). Since it was not a match day, and there was nothing to disturb his digestion, he accepted. On his way out he took a wrong turning and ended up pitch side.

What's the quickest way out of here?" he asked a groundsman. "Quickest way out of Maine Road?" said the man, before pointing to the manager's dug-out. "Just go and sit in there, mate."

Manchester United Ruined My Life (Headline, £14.99)

Allied Dunbar Premiership One: Newcastle 27 Leicester 10

Greenwood butts out of tour

Robert Armstrong sees England's centre sent off as Newcastle keep on the title track

WILL GREENWOOD looks certain to miss England's summer tour to the southern hemisphere after being sent off for hitting Newcastle's Rob Andrew in an ill-tempered contest in Gateshead yesterday.

The Leicester centre's offence, for which a 90-day ban is usual, came in the closing minutes after the referee Ed Morrison showed yellow cards to both the Leicester props, Graham Rowntree and Darren Garforth, and the Newcastle flanker Richard Arnold for various acts of foul play.

The 9,000 crowd was rendered silent by the ugly incident and it seemed incidental that Newcastle, who still have a game in hand, moved to

within one point of the leaders Saracens after outscoring the Tigers by three tries to one.

Leicester were far more competitive than the score suggests but Newcastle's victory means they will win the title if they take three points from their remaining games against Bath and Harlequins.

"There always seems to be a problem when we play Newcastle," said Dean Richards, the Leicester manager. "Will doesn't normally go around headbutting people."

Andrew explained: "There was a mass brawl and Ed told both sides the culprit would go off after the next incident. He had no choice when Will committed his offence, which was more a nudge than a full-blooded butt."

If the Tigers had taken their scoring chances they would have led at half-time but Joel Stranisky failed with a couple of penalties and Leicester were clearly distracted by the provocation and gamesmanship indulged in by both sets of forwards which resulted in a yellow card for Rowntree for illegal play in a ruck.

Newcastle mainly focused on driving through the middle, making the most of Dean Ryan's bulldozing strength. Pat Lam's sharp, incisive running around the fringes and the fetching and carrying of Gareth Archer. The three-quarters frequently overlaboured in their build-up but Gary Armstrong, the scrum-half, took a more direct route and it was no surprise to see the purposeful Scot break from the back of a scrum after 13 minutes and dart forward to score behind the posts.

Stranisky soon replied with

a penalty goal after Newcastle dived over the top but Newcastle stretched their lead with a 27th-minute try after again catching the Leicester defence flat-footed. Doddie Weir won a line-out on the left and Andrew swept the ball in-field to Jon Wilkinson, whose deft transfer sent Lam racing clear to score to the right of the posts.

Four minutes later Leicester at last gained reward for a series of stylish counter-attacks. Their abrasive peck took on their opposite numbers in the left corner and the slow rolling maul that developed gave Neil Back the chance to burrow across the line for a merited try.

At half-time Vasilis Tsikalas replaced Alan Tait in the Newcastle midfield but the change failed to galvanise his team-mates behind the scrum, where pace and creative ideas were generally in short supply. In the final

quarter the game deteriorated rapidly as both sides lost all semblance of discipline and niggling brawls broke out despite frequent warnings.

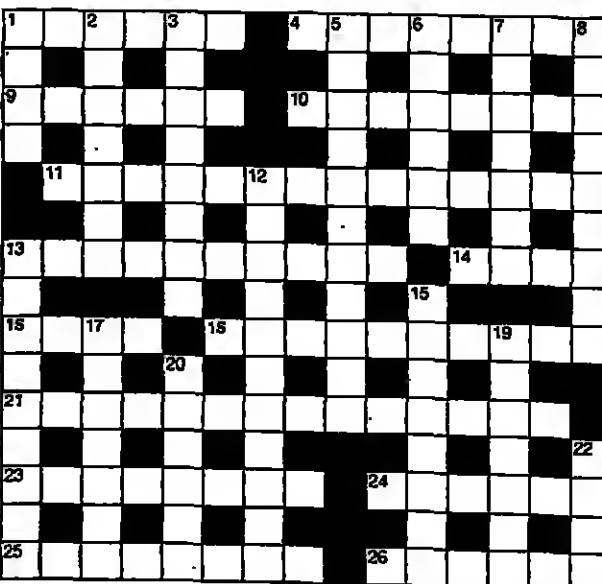
Six minutes from the end Peter Walton sealed the win with a short-range score after Irwin made the initial breakthrough, and Andrew added a couple of late penalty goals. But the sour atmosphere that prevailed was heavily underscored when Greenwood was dismissed for hitting Andrew as he lay on the ground.

SCORERS: Newcastle: Tries: Armstrong, Lam, Walton. Conversion: Andrew. Penalties: Andrew. Leicester: Tries: Back, Garforth, Wilkinson, Tait (P. Lam, 47min), Underwood, Andrew, Armstrong, Poppo (Leicester), Van Zandvoort, Weir, Lam, Arnold, Ryan (Leicester).

Referee: M. Morrison (Glasgow). **TV:** May 17, Harlequins (2), Saracens (1), May 14, Northampton (2).

Guardian Crossword No 21,266

Set by Paul



Across

1 Community of nations in endless gravy split down the middle (6)

4 Crawlers seen off by landlord (6)

8, 15, 11 Madly hoppin' beef. No gov't policy. Ham saner. (10, 10, 14)

10 Musically detached from toccatas (9)

11 See 9

13 Young female takes train with soldier, both ways (10)

14 Bite counters bitter (4)

16 Giant, so repelled (4)

18 See 9

21 22's kinky sex with Dr Death (5, 3, 5)

23, 22 22 of victory initially, then disestablishment (5, 3, 7)

24 One piece of legislation I'd back is a Hindu festival (6)

25 Try and face international sports team (4, 4)

26 Meaty snack taken by setter, perhaps? (3, 3)

Down

1 Invention by undergraduate (4)

2 See 23

3 Tory (very radical) carries round a belt (8)

5 To Lenin, race could mean prejudice (11)

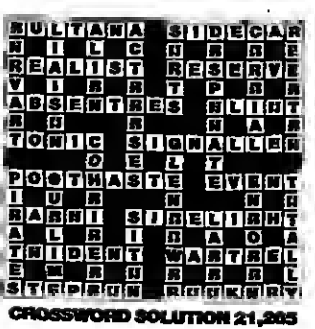
6 Makepeace's fly (6)

7 Strictly Greek? (7)

8 English warm and intimate: check community's interaction (9)

12 Loud and exuberant, quiet and irritated (4-7)

13 Fier's petrified conversation (9)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 21,266

15 Prince, say, in love with Asian islander (6)

17 Manchester United securing a good result prepares for replay? (7)

19 Unfashionable? Then keep external (7)

20 Only extremes in extremely French, French city (6)

22 R protected by pawn perhaps? Then followed by pawn perhaps (4)

Solution tomorrow

23 Stuck? Then call our solutions line on 0991 338 238. Calls cost 50p per minute at all times. Service supplied by ATS

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT

Recycled paper made up 41.4% of the new Guardian in the first half of 1997

ABFBSY



Justin is the first and only premier division footballer to be open about his homosexuality. That took courage. Others have not shown similar bravery. At the time, he and I knew of 12 top players who were either gay or bisexual. None followed Fashanu's example of openness.

Peter Tatchell on how homophobia destroyed the career and life of a football star

G2 page 8

سكنا من الامم